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L E T T E R S

ON THE
FRENCH NATION,

Considered in its
DIFFERENT DEPARTMENTS:

WITH

Many interesting Particulars relating to its Placemen.

BY

Sir ROBERT TALBOT,

Who attended the
Duke of BEDFORD to PARIS in 1762.

TRANSLATED from the FRENCH.

VOLUME II.

*He who would cover the faults of administration with
the veil of silence, acts in opposition to the good of
mankind.*

HELVETIUS de l'Esprit.
Disc. IV. Chap. 10.

L O N D O N :

Printed for B. WHITE, at HORACE'S HEAD, in FLEET-
STREET.

M DCC LXXI.

P. 3 T. R. 2

FOR THE
FRENCH NATION

WITH A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE

REVOLUTION

AND THE PRESENT STATE OF THE



THE COLLECTION OF BOOKS IN THE

MUSEUM

AND THE PRESENT STATE OF THE

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T A B L E
OF THE
L E T T E R S
CONTAINED IN
The SECOND VOLUME.

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Page 247. Note i. Line 4. For *thence* read *whence*.
 --- 264. Line 16. for *prescribed* read *proscribed*.

LETTERS

L E T T E R S

O F

Sir ROBERT TALBOT.

L E T T E R XVIII.

TO MR. HENRY F.

Compliment to a discarded Minister, which makes it probable that these Letters; and the others so superscribed, are addressed to Mr. Henry Fox, [now Lord Holland,] Mr. Pitt's predecessor. Notice of the peace between the two Crowns. Visit which the Author makes to a French Minister retired from Court and employment. Letter from this last to Mr. F. Portrait of a friend of this French Minister.

What is the force of habit in a Statesman. That the sacred Afs of Athens is his emblem. From whom he is fond of concealing himself, and by whom of being seen. What are the pleasures with which his imagination and his memory
VOL. II. B furnish

furnish him. Singular idea of reputation. Insufficiency of reason to console a disgraced Minister, and to make him resigned to his obscurity, pleased in retirement. That religion is not more efficacious to that purpose. Discussion of the succours which it affords to a Protestant and to a Catholic. How little confidence can be placed in Courtiers who set up for devotion and reformation. That it is much wiser to imitate the Duke of Sully, and to be with prudence the Democritus and Heraclitus of the age.

SIR,

I AM truly obliged to you for the honour of your remembrance. It satisfies at once my heart and my self-love. If a Statesman retired from Court has pleasure in employing himself like a Courtier, he must necessarily be possessed of a great fund of generosity. I will venture, however, to assure you, Sir, that you do me no more than justice by ascribing my silence to the reason which you assign. I have not one moment ceased to deserve that your resentment against the species should make an exception in my favour, and that your just indignation should still submit to a sentiment of particular esteem stronger than

finesses, to which new Ministers are so accustomed, that they consider them as the ornaments of genius and talents. If this should continue and border upon reality, the two negociators will make a great progress in a short time. Indeed, I do not see why there should be more difficulty in reconciling two great Powers, who have equal reasons for desiring an end of their quarrel, than in making two wrestlers friends who are pretty equally fatigued with wrestling.

THE danger of * *Cassel* makes no impression here, and the small † check which the Hereditary Prince of *Brunswick* has received is only an amusement for news-writers and the people. Whoever has the least insight into an Office no longer ascribes any influence to armies, not even to the honour of the troops and Generals. They may be compared to tennis-players, who have finished their game, and who toss the ball for amusement, till candle-light. In this kind of sport they usually employ the remainder of their strength, but not

* [The trenches were opened before *Cassel*, Oct. 16, 1762, and the city surrendered to the allies, Nov. 1.]

† [*August* 30, on the heights of *Johannisberg*, in which the *French* under the Prince of *Condé*, the Count de *Stainville*, &c. after being driven from those heights, were reinforced by their main army, and routed the allies. In the retreat, the Hereditary Prince of *Brunswick* was wounded.]

of their skill; and the most skilful there receive some strokes, which they would have known how to parry in a regular game. The Kingdom has need of the termination of the war, and the Court ardently wishes for peace. Ill success quickens the desires and clamours of the people. Some hidden causes, which every one thinks he guesses, oblige the Ministers to act in unison, and to negotiate the treaty as fast as possible. Nothing, Sir, is more true. He would be hooted if he returned as he went. Instead of a crown of laurel, which the fortune of war has refused to place on his head, he will have in his hand a branch of olive. The people so ardently wish to see the latter, that, by shewing it to them, he is sure to obtain a general pardon. The slightest tax, of which they will be disburthened after the peace, will console them for what it will have cost the King to procure it for them.

I owe and return you my sincere acknowledgments for the agreeable message with which you have been pleased to entrust me. I have been with your illustrious friend. I could not better recommend myself to him than by using your name as an introduction. He immediately allowed me to join him in his garden, where he was transplanting some young yoke-elms. He embraced me with transport, and only loosed me from his arms to

overwhelm me with affectionate enquiries after you and all that most nearly concerns you. When he withdrew into his closet to read your letter, he gave me for a companion an Ecclesiastic, who accompanies him in his retirement. He is a worthy intelligent man, with whom a friendship of more than thirty years has connected your friend most closely. The long continuance of the tie does equal honour to them both. The Abbé is at the same time a philosopher and a politician, and a composition the more singular in that way, as he adds practice to speculation, experience to knowledge, in both those departments. Ambition made him thrust himself into the Court of the King his master in his youth. Impatience and some powerful enemies gave him a disgust to it; he hoped to succeed better at the Court of *Rome*. He was there for ten or twelve years seriously engaged in the miserable tricks, and pious suppleness, which the successors of † *Hildebrand* and ‡ *Peretti* make the nourishment

† [Pope, by the name of *Gregory VII*, "a man," says *Bower*, "of most extraordinary parts, of an unbounded ambition, of a haughty and imperious temper. He was the first Pope who claimed the power of deposing Princes." He died in 1085.]

‡ [The famous Pope *Sixtus V*, who advanced the power and grandeur of the Papacy, during the few years that he reigned, more than all his predecessors put together for almost a hundred years before. He died in 1590.]
and

and support of their grandeur. I dined with the two solitaries; and night would have surprised me with them, if your worthy friend perceiving that I gave myself up with true delight to their conversation, had not allowed me to do as I pleased. I made use of his permission, without abusing it: It is scarce three hours drive from *Paris* to this hermitage, which unites all the chearfulness and convenience of rural life, without disfiguring it by magnificence.

THE Abbé surprised me yesterday very agreeably, by a visit. I passed most part of the day with him, and I passed it so well, that I thought it short. Our discourse turned chiefly on the administration. The interest of his friend makes him a severe censor of the generality of those who have a share in the movement of the machine. He informed me of many things very extraordinary, almost incredible. Ah! Sir, that our declaimers at *Westminster* would eagerly and profitably listen to such an instructor! The famous Abbé de† *St. Pierre*, styled, in his time, the political Apothe-

† [A gentleman of *Normandy*, who wrote a great deal on politics. "He was simple enough," said Cardinal *Dubois*, "to inculcate often in his works the most simple truths, and to propose, for the most part, things impracticable. He was continually harping on the scheme of a perpetual peace, and a sort of universal Parliament, which he called the Diet of *Europe*."]]

cary of *Europe*, had only a stall in comparison of the magazine of his brother. I have no idea of an imagination equally strong. Represent to yourself a conversation of six or seven hours with such a man, who adds to that warmth of genius, great discretion, exquisite judgment, and a memory that is almost a prodigy. I am still of my old opinion, that the avenues of the chief offices of Government ought carefully to be closed against men so superior to others, or homage should instantly be paid to their superiority. But if it be possible for patriotism and friendship to subdue them, I think that these are friends and subalterns whom a Minister, capable of stooping to the dominion of those two affections, would not purchase too dearly with half his wealth. The Abbé has sent me for you, Sir, a letter from his friend. But on account of some circumstances, he has required me to read it, and even to take a copy of it, and to send it open in your packet. I have strictly obeyed him in every particular; and I have even exceeded his conditions. I hope that you will not take ill my communicating my copy to Lord B. to whom the subject probably will not be always foreign.

I am, with respect, &c.

“LET-

"LETTER

"FROM A STATESMAN RETIRED FROM BUSINESS AND FROM COURT.

"IT is not to you, Sir, that I assume the masque of which a foolish vanity imposes on me the restraint. By appearing to me in your true colours, you are entitled to see me in the same. You have nothing with which to reproach yourself which is not common to us both. The sacred Ass of *Athens*†, which you make your symbol, is the emblem of me. Not to be a prey to weariness, I must, for the rest of my days, follow the occupation which I have followed for the best part of my life. If our body was a mere machine, one could scarce conceive a higher idea of our mind, to which habit is, in the like case, a second na-

† This animal, being grown old in carrying the materials of a temple, was declared sacred, and pensioned by the Republic, in order to be exempted from labour the rest of his life, and supported at the expence of the public. The habit of carrying was so strong in this laborious Ass, that he went regularly every day to associate with those who had succeeded him; and imitating or correcting their pace by his own, he seemed to reject the idleness which had been indulged him as a reward.

ture. It is said, that those who in an advanced age have been maimed by a cannon, feel, in the limbs which they have lost, the pains of the gout and the contractions of the cramp. The reason assigned for it is, that they retain the impression of the former course of the animal spirits and fluids, and that all the sensations of the nervous parts principally reside in the fibre which is the root of all the nerves. A man removed from high employments, after having long discharged them, retains, in like manner, the genius and taste of the place which he has lost; he has a strong passion for objects which exist no longer for him, and the interests which affected him still find him sensible. Like the laborious animal which the *Grecian* history has immortalised, he would still have on his neck the collar from which he had been disengaged, he goes abreast with the animals in harness, and he inclines his neck with them, as if he shared their labour. I do not weary myself in searching for the springs of this mechanism. Amusing myself with its play, I give myself up to it without taking upon me the reasoning Philosopher. I exhort you, Sir, to continue to do the same. Though it be a weakness, it is of little consequence, as it affords pleasure. Cease to hide it from those who would have the cruelty to insult it. However, why should

should we be ashamed to be no more than men, and to let it appear?

“Do me not the honour to think that I make this exclamation, only because I have surmounted false shame. I am troubled with that mental disease; I reproach myself for it, and I cannot cure it. It is the offspring of frivolous and malicious men, whom I do not esteem, nor despise so much as not to fear them. Though it costs me dear to disguise myself from them, I am fond of taking that trouble; and I am rejoiced in not taking it to no purpose. I think myself well revenged of those sorry jesters, as I have deprived them of the pleasure which they promised themselves of laughing at me. It is for them that I act † *Arsenius*; that I seem to live as *Seneca* wrote; that I shew myself thoroughly convinced and undeceived as to the vanities of the world. I have the satisfaction to see them so well pleased with my game, that they admire, in spite of themselves, that renunciation of which they do not perceive

† [“A deacon of the *Romish* Church, famed for his learning and piety. In 383, Pope *Damasus* sent him to *Theodosius* the Great to be preceptor to the Princes *Arcadius* and *Honorius*, to whom he was godfather. After the death of *Theodosius*, in 395, *Arsenius* withdrew into a desert in *Egypt*, where he lived and died with great sanctity.” *Baronius*, A. C. 383. and 395.]

themselves

themselves capable; they are jealous of it, as they think me happy by its assistance. Let me tell you, Sir, that it is from a disposition of mind entirely opposite that I derive my chief consolation, and my true tranquillity. I let that secret be divulged to a few friends, who are indulgent enough to overlook my foibles. With them I quit the assumed character; and they may know, that if I yet reckon myself any thing in the world, I owe it to my memory and my imagination; and I do not dissemble to them, that I was not superior to my fortune till I began to act for myself the part which I have played in public with some applause.

“ THUS as a military veteran consoles himself for the forgetfulness of office, by recounting his fatigues and exploits, I cease to be tormented by the idea of my present obscurity, when I reflect on the transactions in which I have borne a part. The old officer revenges his inutility by ascribing to the former wars, in which he served, an importance and conduct which he refuses to those which have succeeded the reform. As for me, I seem in idea to steal from my retirement by supposing myself in private an assistant to my old colleagues and to my successors. I transport myself in imagination into the King's Councils, and into the Courts in
which

which are the greatest intrigues. I impute to the overtures which I have formerly made the resolutions which are taken conformable to my ideas: I controvert those which would not have had my consent: I am grieved when the latter succeed, I rejoice when the others prevail. I sometimes venture to say to myself, that those passed in Council, because I was no longer heard there. Perhaps in these moments of voluntary delirium, I resemble those systematical Philosophers who will have the world such as they would have made it, and not such as it might or ought to be. But I do not dogmatise; and my folly is absolutely my personal affair. Thus as the petty *Khan* of the *Tartars*, when he has dined, allows all the Sovereigns of the universe to dine in their turn, contented with my reflections, such as they are, I leave the rest of the world to act and think as they please. In this manner, I find, Sir, in my annihilation a new existence. I encourage myself by reflections deeply impressed: I would convince myself, that I am not in an error. I take up the compass of Statesmen: I set myself on the east of history, which is their north. I enter with my predecessors and contemporaries into conferences the more decisive, as, admitting none of the intricate trifles of ceremonial, I only
bring

bring on the carpet facts, and arguments drawn from them.

“ THIS, Sir, is the resource which I have provided myself against discontent, which is the tormentor of our equals. I go the same pace, and I go farther than you. I wish, for a moment, that, without that, I could be superior to an ambition which is no longer made for me. I wish, that, without this assistance, I was able to support the solitude of my ante-chamber, and the reduction of the crowd of my dependents to the handful of my domestics. I am sensible, that I am one who may be brought to that, without any great effort, by reason. I have only to represent to myself, that reputation, which is the idol to which we sacrifice, is confined in a circle, beyond which none of its lines pass. Celebrated in *France*, known in one half of *Europe*, named in the other, if I were a *Turenne* or a *Richelieu*, I could not conceal from myself that I am utterly unknown in *Asia* and *Africa*; that, consequently, my earnestness to fill with my name all the space which it can traverse, is an irregular desire; and that if I know how to contract the circle, the honour of occupying the smallest advantageously, is as satisfactory as that of diffusing myself.

myself through the greatest*. But what do I gain from being affected by this demonstration, except the sparing myself some disgusts? With what arms will reason furnish me against this want of employment which makes us resemble a wretch thrown on a desert island by a storm? The particulars of rural oeconomy amuse but do not employ him who is not born to them, or who is not trained to them by long habit. No hands but my own prune my trees, and rake the walks of my garden. When I weed my favourite flowers, my thoughts wander, and swiftly fly somewhere else: my imagination is that of a wretch, which delights to torment him, which swiftly transports him beyond a vast extent of seas, in order to bring him back more sorrowful to the barren rock which he traverses. Let the composers of idylliums and eclogues indulge their imaginations in their descriptions of rural life, I give them leave. But let them not address their chearful representations to me. My smell cannot be persuaded to think that dunghills have an agreeable odour. My ears, flattered some moments with the singing

* [Circles are prais'd, not that abound
In largeness, but th' exactly round;
So Life we praise, that does excell
Not in much time, but acting well.

Waller.]
of

of the nightingale and linnet, are by no means delighted with the barking of dogs, the lowing of cows, the bleating of sheep. The rusticity of my peasants strikes me more than their innocent simplicity. Reason directs a man to seek his happiness in himself; but habit, stronger than reason, makes me perceive that mine is not in me, or that I should seek it there in vain.

“ THE first emotion of the illustrious, when disgraced, as soon as fortune had abandoned them, has been to have recourse to religion, and to throw themselves into the arms of the Deity, who never forsakes his creatures. This emotion is excellent, from whatever source it flows. But how far is it from satisfying our habitual activity! A conviction of the greatness, wisdom, justice, goodness, and other attributes suitable to the perfection of the Supreme Being, is a business soon done. Our poor reason soon teaches us, that he is every thing which we can, and every thing which we cannot, conceive excellent. With what more does religion furnish you, Sir, who follow one, whose worship is simple even to nakedness, and which includes all its exercises in the homage of the heart? Will you support yourself by long and frequent meditations on mysteries, true without being probable, and stamped by their very sublimity with

with the seal of the Deity? Will you endeavour to fathom what religion herself commands you to revere, without seeking to comprehend it? How can a religious Christian be employed with those objects of his veneration and faith, except in checking concerning them the flights of his reason, which would be apt to split upon them!

“ IF, in order to be of the Roman-Catholic church, -I cease not to be reasonable, my deference for my ghostly father places me in no better situation than the most subtilised Calvinist. Such cool judgment, as the importunities of this good man leave me, is sufficient for me to set a just value on the pious exercises which he recommends to me; and I perceive nothing in them capable of filling the void which he requires in my heart and mind, in order to make room there for this comfortable religion.

“ AN old worldly-minded woman, whom the world no longer sees, will employ herself, no doubt, in visiting the hospitals and prisons; she there hears herself praised; she there exercises a kind of empire; it is a new world, which in that respect, supplies the place of the other. She will eagerly frequent the sermons of the fashionable preacher, the preparatory processions, the festivals of the Church of every kind. In all

all these places she meets a crowd, she is seen by many people, and thinks herself distinguished by them: this is a copy of her habitual pleasures: she insensibly attaches herself to it as much as she was attached to the original. What are avocations of this kind to me? It remains for me to subject myself, by the spirit of piety, to mutter seven times in a day some barbarous *Latin*, of which the simplest homage to the Deity gives me, at least, the equivalent. I have also the resource of constraining myself to turn in my fingers the beads of the Rosary, and to annex some merit with the Almighty to such and such a number of times as the devout compliment to the Virgin shall be repeated. Shall I admire the fables of the Legend? Have I faith in reserve for the gigantic and ridiculous stories of those obscure inhabitants of cloisters and deserts, who subverted, at their will and pleasure, the order of nature, by miracles as useless as their persons? It is, however, from these sources that I must draw the consolations with which religion can supply me. I should indeed be a great rogue, if I still had vicious passions, which I could not master without the assistance of piety. Besides, should I endeavour to gain instruction as to my passions from the books of our Moralists, learned without knowledge of mankind, without being

ing used to the world, without experience as to moral good and evil, ignorant and rash teachers, who pronounce an anathema against affections the most valuable to human nature, the most precious to Society? Can I, in short, have a relish for the declamations of these irrational or dishonest fanatics, who only promise me happiness in another life in proportion as I shall make myself miserable in this? I hate and despise all these pretended shining lights, who deny that the passions are excellent gifts of the Creator to the creature, on whom, at the same time, he bestowed reason to regulate them and make them subservient to happiness. A Christian after the manner of these knaves, or fools, ceases to be a man, and would scarce find a species of brutes that would adopt him.

“ I GIVE no credit to the sudden conversions of discarded Ministers and Courtiers, who preach up the being detached from the things of this lower world. If they were sincere, I say that their minds were weakened. But most of them were men in despair, who caught at whatever they could, ruined gamblers who perused a chapter of *Seneca*. The *Maxims of Wisdom*, ascribed to M. * *Fouquet*,

* [Attorney-General of the Parliament, and Superintendent of the Finances. He died in disgrace in 1680. See the next Letter.]

the small Treatise *on the Use of Adversity*, composed by the Count de † *Bussy-Rabutin*, shew their authors in no other light. By the coldness of the *Maxims*, it is easy to see that they did not deeply affect their writer. We perceive in *Bussy* the actor of a part, who feels nothing so sensibly as the loss of his money. All these lay-preachers are foxes who have had the misfortune to lose their tails. Instead of endeavouring to supply their loss by false tails, they undertake to prove that tails are inconvenient and that those who are well provided would be gainers by getting rid of theirs.

“THOUGH the confessions which you, Sir, have deigned to make me do not embolden me frankly to tell you where I am, you are one of my friends whose indulgence urges me to be sincere. Could I fear that you would blame me for treading in the steps of the Duke of *Sully*, the wisest Statesman of his age? This great man, torn from business, and from Court, at a time when he could have

† [“The Count de *Bussy* was sent to the *Bastille*, in 1664. *The amours of the Gauls* was the pretence of his imprisonment, but the true cause was a song, in which the King was treated with too much freedom. . . . His works were not good enough to compensate for the mischief they did him. He spoke his own language with purity; he had some merit, but more conceit; and he made no use of the merit he had, but to make himself enemies. He died in 1693.” *Age of Lewis XIV*, Cb. 24.]

appeared

appeared there with the utmost glory and advantage, seemed to forget his rank and fortune, and only to retain his personal dignity. Retired to his estate, he seemed there to enjoy only himself and his virtue. No one, however, has adopted his system, which I do not hesitate to think yours, more completely than myself. It may truly be said, that having nothing more to eat, he knew how to chew the cud. I am well assured, that he did not dictate to his secretaries all that he committed to paper in his retirement. After amusing himself with recollecting the steps which he had taken in his time, he observed those of his successors, and compared them with those of his contemporaries. Sometimes a *Heraclitus*, and sometimes a *Democritus*, he wept and laughed at the follies which he saw, and at those which he could not forget. I, Sir, do the same. Only, as I have more people and connections about me than the two *Greek Philosophers* had, I imitate the *French Sage* in neither laughing nor lamenting before those who occasion these emotions. I exhort you, Sir, to partake, as much as possible, of the same diversion. I shall receive with infinite satisfaction the account which you will be so good as to give me of its effects, being, with the highest regard, &c."

LETTER

L E T T E R XIX.

TO THE EARL OF B.

Summary of the public life of the Marshal-Duke de Belle-isle. Difference between a great man and a celebrated man. What were the Marshal's talents. How fortunate his being the grandson of M. Fouquet was to him. Portrait of that Minister. That Scarron was the réâl patron of the Marshal at Court. Elogium and death of the Count de Gisors, the Marshal's only son. The present which the Marshal made the King of the estate so named, criticised. That his will might have been more honourable to his memory than it is. Particulars concerning his Hôtel in Bourbon-street, Paris. Digression on letters de cachet. The Marshal's good beginning at Court. His prudence at the time of the change of Government. By what right he was entitled to the good will of Cardinal Fleury. How useful that was to him in extricating him from a dilemma. Very suspicious anecdote of his connections with M. le Blanc, Secretary at War. Another very true one of the danger which he ran in the Bastille. How he was the confidant of Cardinal Fleury in the war

war of 1733. How he fixed himself afterwards in that post of favour. That it is probable that M. de Belle-isle could not succeed M. Chauvelin as Secretary of State. The Cardinal's reasons for not listening to it. Plot against the City of Luxembourg. The Marshal's fault in that black affair. Particulars concerning the plan of the German war in 1741. How little exact M. Belle isle was as to the part essential to the execution. What an antagonist he had in his negotiations in Germany. Portrait of the Count de Cobentzel. What were the principal effects of the superiority of the genius and talents of the German Minister. Reasons of the Marshal de Broglio's disgust in the war of Bohemia. What a passion Marshal de Belle-isle always had for negotiating. Observations on the retreat of Prague. How much the Marshal deserved to be rallied when he complained of being taken by surprise at the relay of a Hanoverian post. That this pretended surprise extricated him from a difficulty. A particular of the Marshal's residence in Windsor-Castle. How much honour was done him by the expedition in Provence. How little, by the project of that of Italy. Death of his brother the Chevalier. The Marshal's heroic firmness. That it could have been wished that he had been Plenipotentiary at the peace of Aix la Chapelle. That
he

he lived with dignity in the interval of the two wars. That he would have been transmitted with more glory to posterity, if he had died five or six years sooner. Particulars of M. Fouquet at Pignerol.

MY LORD,

I HAVE found in my researches concerning the late Marshal-Duke *de Belle-isle* a conclusive reason of the difference which posterity makes between men celebrated by their employments, and those who owed their reputation to their great talents. All that is personal to the latter has been eagerly collected, has been choicely preserved, and carefully transmitted by tradition. It was their person that was revered, and a regard for it has remained; our love extends even to their pictures. In the others, we honour only the great posts which they occupied; and their reputation was a part of their inheritance, which became the property of their successors. A hundred proofs are here mentioned with complacency of the virtue and abilities of the † *Bay-*

† [The Chevalier *Bayard*, one of the greatest Generals of his time, sur-named *the fearless and the blameless*. After many gallant actions under *Charles VIII*, *Lewis XII*, and *Francis I*, he was killed at the retreat of *Rebec*, in *Italy*, in 1524.]

ards,

ards, the du* *Guesclins*, the † *Turennes*. There are many of ‡ *Condé*, § *Luxembourg*, || *Vendôme*, § *Catinat*, †* *Villars*, †† *Maurice* of

* [*Bertrand du Guesclin*, Constable of *France*, Duke de *Molina*, &c. greatly distinguished himself in the wars against the *English*, during the reigns of *John* and *Charles V.* He died in 1389.]

† [*Marshal of France* 1644, *Marshal-General* 1660, killed by a cannon ball near *Saltzback*, in *Germany*, 1675. "Though *Turenne* had not always been successful, though he had also committed errors . . . yet having always confessed his errors, repaired his defeats, and done a great deal with a little, he was regarded as the greatest General in *Europe*, at a time when the art of war was more studied and better understood than ever." *Age of Lewis XIV*, Ch. 11."]

‡ [*Lewis II*, of that name, Prince of *Condé*, surnamed the Great, one of the most extraordinary geniuses in war that the world ever produced. He died in 1686.]

§ ["The death of *Marshal Luxembourg*, (who was a pupil of the great *Condé*, and in his character resembled him), which happened in 1695, seemed to put an end to the rapid course of the victories of *France*." *Age of Lewis XIV*, Ch. 15.]

|| ["Grandson of *Henry IV*, like him bold, intrepid, affable, benevolent, without pride, hatred, envy, or revenge." *Ditto*. He died in 1712."]

† ["A man", says *Voltaire*, "who had courage and abilities equal to any enterprize." He died in 1712.]

†* [*Generalissimo* of the armies of *France*, *Spain*, and *Sardinia* in the 82d year of his age, a man who seemed designed to be the bulwark of *France*. He finished his glorious career in 1733, after having taken *Milan*." *Voltaire*.]

†† [*Count Saxe* merited his high reputation by his skilful retreat in *Germany*, and by his victories in

Saxony. If most others who have acted the principal parts at Court and in the army, for a century past, had not left some heirs of their name, that name would no longer be known but in the collections of the ballads and lampoons of their time. It is strictly true, my Lord, that Marshal *de Belle-isle*, a man the most greedy of reputation of any in his time, and placed by fortune in the best situation to acquire it, was buried in oblivion before his body was interred. Yet he died in full possession of the first employments of the Kingdom of *France*.

He was a man of great wit, he had even genius, but so immethodical, so irregular in its flights, that he always seemed to have only a strong imagination. By his fiery impetuosity, he was discovered by the sagacious to have rashness rather than vivacity. But a great fondness for the business of the cabinet, and the appearance of strong application, sup-

Flanders, in the war of 1741. To the practical part he joined a profound theory, vigilance, and secrecy, the art of knowing how to alter a project in good time, and to execute it with rapidity; presence of mind, resources, and foresight were talents which he possessed, by the general acknowledgment of all the officers." *Age of Lewis XV, Chap. 15.*

He was the son of *Augustus II.* King of *Poland*, by the Countess of *Koningsmarck*, and, like *Turenne*, was Marshal-General of the *French* armies, by virtue of which, he had the command over Princes of the blood.]

porting

porting the decisive tone which was become familiar to him, the herd of politicians and courtiers ascribed his confidence and self-sufficiency to a consciousness of the justice and solidity of his judgment. Your Lordship will think with reason that these talents could not alone have enabled him so highly to advance his fortune, in a nation where every one piques himself on having wit, imagination, and activity. But during the course of his long life, the circumstances of affairs were constantly in his favour; and to these he owed all that he was. Your Lordship will discover, at his first coming to Court, that remarkable predilection of fortune: he appeared there exactly at the time when it was an advantage to him to be the grandson of a Minister most cruelly disgraced. If he had been one generation nearer to his grandfather M. * *Fouquet*, he would have been doomed to the obscurity in which his father lived, with talents perhaps superior to his. *Colbert* and *Louvois* were dead. While those two Ministers lived, nothing could be done at Court for the children

* [*Fouquet* was sentenced, in 1664, to perpetual exile. This punishment the King commuted for another more severe by confining him in the castle of *Pignerol*.]
Age of Lewis XIV, Chap. 24.

See the conclusion of this letter.]

of a rival whom they had oppressed, crushed, with as much cowardice as injustice.

YOUR Lordship knows, that M. *Fouquet*, Attorney-General of the Parliament of *Paris*, and Super-intendant of the Finances, had a heart much superior to his birth, and was liberal even beyond his fortune. True it is, that he drew out of the King's coffers: but he thought he gave from his own, and he gave with a generosity worthy of the most generous Prince. His attention was fixed on every man who distinguished himself in his profession. He gave an incredible number of pensions to courtiers in strait circumstances, to officers of distinguished courage and experience, to profound scholars, to entertaining wits. The ridiculous accusation, which was laid to his charge, of fortifying the small island of *Belle-isle*, to make it a Sovereignty for himself independent on *France*, allows us to place to the account of black calumny the motive to which malice has imputed his liberality. None but persons void of sense, or of shame, have seemed to believe that he flattered himself that his presents would gain him so many friends and vassals in the army and at court, as to enable him to brave the inconstancy of royal favour.

MARSHAL *de Belle-isle* reaped the fruits of his grandfather's generosity. He appeared for
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the first time at Court in the beginning of this century, at the time when the Marchioness *de Maintenon*, (having by her judicious intrepidity made those submit who had pretended to disgrace her for having been the poorest and the noblest lady in *France*, and for rather chusing to be the consort of *Scarron* than the servant of some Abbess,) took a pleasure in heaping riches and honours on the persons who had formerly done her some good offices. The grandson of the unfortunate *Fouquet*, persecuted by two ambitious men whom she had hated, could not seem to her a troublesome dependent. This generous lady recollecting several gratuities of the Super-intendant, which had restored to the burlesque poet his gaiety, and ease to his family, was desirous of returning them to the heir of the benefactor, and she formed to herself as much glory as satisfaction in patronising him. Discernment in the choice of men was not the bright side of this celebrated favourite. It may be thought, that she was often voluntarily deceived in it, and, because her situation laid her under the necessity of acquiescing to a Monarch, enslaved by religion, that piety was the cloak of great talents which she took for granted. But she was more frequently mistaken for want of information or experience. The handsome

Duke of *Richelieu* seeming to her born to be a great man, the Count *de Belle-isle*, no less lively, and very different in his application, could not be construed less to his advantage.

THIS famous Duke *de Belle-isle*, Peer, Marshal of *France*, Prince of the Holy *Roman* Empire, Grandee of *Spain* of the first class, &c. was, literally speaking, a creature of the poor and facetious *Scarron*. The Author of the *Comical Romance* is the true patron of the house of *Belle-isle*, which would, without dispute, have become one of the first in the kingdom of *France*, if the Marshal's son had left children as promising as himself. The *French* and foreigners are unanimous in opinion of this young Nobleman, gloriously, but very unfortunately, sacrificed at the battle of *Crevelt*, in 1758, by the mean jealousy of some Lieutenant-Generals in regard to the Marquess *de St. Germain*, who is at present at the head of the army of *Denmark*. An order came to the carabineers to charge the infantry of the allies which was yet unbroken. The Count *de Gisors*, commandant of that chosen body of cavalry which snatched the victory from us at *Fontenoy*, was aware of the danger as well as imprudence of the operation. But as it was ordered in terms clear and express, he obeyed without

without arguing; and heroically met his fate in the midst of the *Hanoverian* bayonets.*

AFTER the death of this only son, the Marshal was unconnected with the world; like King *Priam*, he had survived his whole family.† It is questioned whether he had any collateral relations left, whose kindred was not too remote for them to produce proofs of it, and to claim a right to his estate. The present which he made to the King of his estate of *Gisors*, to enjoy it after his decease, was, consequently, no great es-

* ["The Prince of *Brunswick* took him prisoner, behaved to him like a brother, and did not leave him till his death, which he honoured with his tears. The Count was a most promising youth, being equally instructed in affairs of State and in the art of war; he was capable of great or lesser undertakings; as his politeness was equal to his courage, he was beloved at court, and in the army." *Age of Lewis XV, Chap 33.*

Among the foreigners who sympathised with the *French* on this loss, Dr. *Maty* (now one of the Librarians of the *British Museum*) who had been personally acquainted with this young Nobleman in *England*, lamented his death in some elegant *French* verses, published soon after in the *Dutch* papers.]

† [This cannot but remind an *Englishman* of the beautiful allusion in a Sonnet by the late Mr. *Edwards*, on a Family Picture.

..... Like a column left alone, —

Scap'd from the fury of the barbarous *Gaul*,.

Or wasting time, which has the rest o'erthrown,
Amidst his house's ruins he remain'd,

Single, unpropp'd, and nodding to his fall.

See *Dodley's Poems*, Vol. ii. p. 326.]

fort of affection; since, in default of heirs, the fief of itself returned to his Majesty. This donation, however, made a great noise in its time; and his admirers spoke louder than those who considered as a cheat the old man's artifice in selling to the King what belonged to his Majesty, and of making the Monarch receive, under the name of a gift, that for which he was made to pay dearly.

No Minister was ever placed in so advantageous a situation to immortalise his name by his will, and to endear his memory to the *French*, though he could not endear his person. His eager desire of fame gave reason to imagine that the best establishments made in the department of the War-Office would be the objects of his preference, that he would apply his personal property to the discharge of the debts of the Royal † Hospital of Invalids, that he would settle his landed estate on the Royal ‡ Military School, or that he would form with it some Commanderies for the * Or-

† [“ In this great asylum, founded by *Lewis XIV.*, four thousand soldiers, and a great number of officers, find comfort for their old age, and relief for their wounds and their wants. . . . This hospital completed his endeavours to deserve the being well served.” *Voltaire.*]

‡ [Founded by *Lewis XV.*]

* [An honour which is frequently more desired than pecuniary rewards, instituted by *Lewis XIV.*]

der of St. *Lewis*, whose Knights he had multiplied beyond measure, and which has not altogether twenty thousand pounds sterling to distribute to more than sixteen thousand officers, whom it decorates with its cross. Nothing like an equivalent to this has he done. He has given his Hôtel at *Paris* to his successors in the War-Office; as if it was of much importance to the State to have one of its Secretaries dwell at the end of *Pont-Royal* rather than any where else. Except a few small legacies, the remainder of his great riches is left to the Marquess *de Castries*, a gentleman quite a stranger to the Marshal. No mention is made, in the will, of General *Fouquet*, who does such honour to that obscured name in *Prussia*, that a man desirous of making it illustrious might have wished to have had that brave officer for his heir.

ON the subject of the Hôtel, there is an anecdote of which I have not yet had an opportunity to obtain an exact confirmation. The Count *de Belle-isle* built this house at the beginning of his being in favour with Cardinal *Fleury*. According to the plan of his architect, he had no ground but for the body of the building, and for the left wing on the side of *Pont-Royal*, to which the terrace, overlaid with fine stone, was to extend. The spot which the right wing required was occupied

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by a house belonging to a lawyer, who dwelled in it. *M. de Belle-isle* taking for granted that he could purchase it when he pleased, ordered his terrace to be covered agreeably to the plan, and the toothings to be fixed for the right wing; and when the masons had gone so far, he offered to treat with the Magistrate for his house. He was offended at the Courtier's being so inconsiderate as to form designs on his estate without deigning to consult him. He bluntly refused to hear of the bargain. The Courtiers, the mediators, made him several advances, offers, and intreaties, without effect. Unmoved by promises, he was provoked by threats. *M. de Belle-isle* thinking to subdue his obstinacy, made him undergo the vexation of a letter *de cachet*. A letter *de cachet* is a billet of exile dispatched in the King's name, and of which the only motive is his Majesty's good pleasure. It is also sometimes a billet of imprisonment, without being invested with any other forms than that of the sign-manual. They have been strangely abused in *France* almost ever since the beginning of this century, and especially during the ministry of Cardinal *Fleury*. The Bishops and Intendants had at their disposal some bundles of letters *de cachet*, in which the name of him, whom the King was said to punish, was left blank, as well as the place of his

his exile. These letters carried a peremptory order from his Majesty to the person to whom they were addressed, to repair without delay wherever he was banished, and there to remain quiet till a new order. Frequently the wretch, forgotten by the Prelate or Intendant, has grown old, far from his family, by the King's order, whom he never gave occasion to know that he existed. The neighbour of the Count *de Belle-isle* was not a man who would respectfully bend beneath the yoke. He soon got the letter revoked; and he remained in his house, where his greatest delight was to defy his neighbour the Courtier, who urged him in vain to draw discretion out of his purse, and to set what price he pleased on his complaisance. Steady to the enmity which he had vowed, he took the best measures to secure his possessions after his death. He bequeathed his house to his heirs, under an express condition, that, in case any of them should be inclined to sell it, it should go to the Hospital, on which he entailed it. The Count then lost all hopes of completing his Hôtel. But that he might not entirely lose the honour of having formed the idea of a regular building, he placed on the back of the obstinate Magistrate's partition-wall the elevation of the right wing in lattice-work, a whim, which being painted green, the more excites the curiosity.

riosity of strangers, and while it remains, will not so much display the good taste as the imprudence of the founder.

THE Count *de Belle-isle* began his career with great brilliancy; and he had few rivals who dared to appear so. There remained at Court an idea of the rank which he would have held, if his grandfather had not been oppressed by injustice: the most abandoned had a kind of respect for the misfortunes of his family. He was tall and well-made. He was exact as to his duties, eager of instruction: he seemed equally animated with the desire and the hope of arriving at the first military honours. It is not in a young Colonel of twenty years old that we suspect the Statesman, and search for the buds of it. Applying to his profession, well received at Court, he was one of the officers whom Marshal *de Villars* was ordered most freely to admit into his train, when he repaired to † *Rastadt*. It would be ridiculous to rank in the number of negotiations the conferences of this *French General* with Prince *Eugene*. The Count *de Belle-isle* related them by the post to his friends of both sexes, as he would have done

† [“ *Villars* had the honour of restoring the military reputation of *France*, of terminating the war, and of concluding peace with the Emperor, by a treaty signed at *Rastadt* in 1714.” *Univ. Mod. Hist.* Vol. ix, p. 507.]

the ceremonies of some marriage, for which the Marshal had been proxy for the King his master.

M. *de Belle-isle* was esteemed and distinguished among the most promising officers. He was, besides, a very warm partisan of the fair sex, and the declared humble servant of the ladies. This alone was a sufficient recommendation to the Duke-Regent. But that of the Marchioness *de Maintenon* had no less weight with that Prince, who was perhaps even more generous than debauched. He recollected with gratitude that the favourite had drawn him out of the dilemma in which the intrigues of *Spain* had involved him; and he was so equitable as to excuse her for that which her affection for the Duke of † *Mayne*, to whom she had always supplied the place of a mother, had made her do to his prejudice in favour of that legitimated Prince. It is well known, that he retained not the resentment, which interest and good policy allowed, against those who were dear to the Marchioness, and

† [The education of this Prince, who was the natural son of *Lewis XIV.* by *Madam de Montespan*, was entrusted to *Madam de Maintenon*, then the widow of *Scarron*, an employment to which she was named by the King himself. And hence arose her connection with his Majesty. The Duke of *Mayne* was legitimated in 1715, by an edict which was registered without any remonstrance. He died in 1736.]

by whom he was hated. With much more reason he was fond of favouring those of them who freely did him service. The Count *de Belle-isle* was one of the latter. Having discovered that the Duke of *Mayne* was not one who would maintain with firmness and resolution the advantages which the will of *Lewis XIV* had given him*, the Count thought there was no occasion for him to remain attached to that Prince by honour, at the expence of his fortune.

WHEN he lost the Marchioness *de Maintenon*, he preserved the friends of both sexes, whom the concern, which that Lady always seemed to take in his welfare, had procured him. He had on his side the powerful house of *Noailles*, the Society of Jesuits still more powerful, and the fine Ladies of the old Court, who were become avowed devotees. It was not necessary to be in the secret of this superior party to conjecture that the Duke of † *Bourbon*

* ["By the will of *Lewis XIV*, the Duke of *Mayne* was appointed guardian of the present King ; but soon after, the Duke of *Orleans*, the next heir to the Crown, a man of far superior abilities, prevailed with the Parliament of *Paris* to declare him sole Regent, and the will of *Lewis XIV* was set aside." *Univ. Mod. Hist.* Vol. xi. p. 607."]

† ["It was always the fate of the *Condés* to give way to priests. *Henry of Condé* was borne down by Cardinal *de Richelieu*, the great *Condé* was imprisoned by Cardinal

would not be long Prime Minister, and to know who would be his successor. The late Bishop of * *Frejus* had not prevailed in hiding his ambition under his affected moderation. The Duke-Regent, who had discovered it, had expressed himself on that subject in high terms; and the Prelate had not disowned it. This modest Ecclesiastic, who governed *France* for fifteen years with more authority, though with less splendor, than Cardinal *de Richelieu*, had been appointed Preceptor to *Lewis XV*; by the patronage of the Dutchesse *de Ventadour* and the Countess *de Muy*, friends of the Marchioness *de Maintenon*†. A dependent of the latter had with that Prelate a kind of affinity; he could not but be received with pleasure into the number of the peculiar servants of his future Eminence. To a man of ambition, who took his fortune, as it were, by sap, the acquisition of such a one as the Count, thoroughly disposed to make his own fortune with brilliancy and speed, was highly valuable. Well was it for the latter to have made such an admirable choice of a patron.

Cardinal *Mazarin*, and the Duke of *Bourbon* was displaced by Cardinal *Fleury*." *Voltaire*.]

* [*Fleury* resigned this Bishoprick in the year 1715.]

† [*Voltaire* says, that "the Bishop of *Frejus* was appointed, by *Lewis XIV*, Preceptor to his grandson, on the repeated solicitations of Marshal *de Villeroy*."] Without

Without that, it was not easy to see how he could have extricated himself from the dilemma in which his connections with a † man of the first rank at Court involved him. Considering the severity of the laws of *France*, he could scarce have had a more dreadful embarrassment, as both his honour and his life were at stake. The following is the fact, as related by contemporaries, whom, however, I am far from admitting and giving as good vouchers.

A MAN named *Gentil*, chief Clerk and Cashier to *la Jonchere*, Treasurer-extraordinary of War, was killed on the road from *Paris* to *N.* a country-house, where he was going to meet his master, who was there by appointment with Mr. *N.* It is said, that that day had been chosen by the latter to settle accounts with the Treasurer, who had paid considerable sums by his orders. It is added, that *la Jonchere*, imagining that all the business in question was to form a plan for the repayment, and at most to balance accounts, had only brought with him his books of transcript; that Mr. *N.* on the other hand, desirous of a discharge, had brought a portofolio, filled with securities which the Treasurer could not refuse to accept in payment; that at the instant of the conclusion, the former demanded his original draughts, and was

† [*M. le Blanc*, Secretary at War.]

provoked to find, that, for want of these papers, the affair must be deferred to another time; that some one proposed to the Treasurer the sending an express to *Gentil*, with express orders to bring such and such papers which were in his custody; that the Treasurer agreed to it, in complaisance to Mr. *N.* and that, in short, the Clerk in obedience was on the road with this valuable charge, when he was murdered. It is added, that the papers were not found in his cloaths; that the Treasurer searched for them to no purpose in his office; and that Mr. *N.* not chusing to trust his books and memory in regard to the debt, refused to pay it, unless his original draughts were produced. Whatever be the case with regard to this story, of which I strongly suspect the truth, Mr. *N.* was sent to the *Bastille*, and the Count *de Belle-isle* was confined in that dismal castle more closely even than he. This, my Lord, is fact; and it is no less certain, that M. *de Belle-isle* has said himself, that "he received in his prison, which " he thought inaccessible, an anonymous note, " advising him to act with great precaution, " and, above all, to touch no food but what " should be given him by such a jailor." Your Lordship may form what conjectures you please as to this particular. A few months after, the Count was set at liberty;
and

and no more mention was ever made, in regard to him, of the Treasurer *la Jonchere*, the Clerk *Gentil*, and their papers.

CARDINAL *de Fleury* being become Prime Minister, or equivalent to it, the Count was one of his most officious courtiers. His Eminence had great sensibility of little attentions, and M. *de Belle-isle* was deeply skilled in this business of courts. He was Major-General of Dragoons, and Lieutenant-General in the armies of *France*, at the time of the war of 1733. M. *Chauvelin* had gained an ascendant over the Cardinal, and taking the confidential place in the cabinet, the count was obliged to content himself with being his Eminence's man in the army. Supple, dexterous, inexhaustible in circumstances, conjectures, projects, he soon made himself an important servant to his patron: and he became necessary to him, as soon as *Chauvelin*, by his pride and conceit, had destroyed the confidence which the Minister had placed in him. However, M. *de Belle-isle*, who had a considerable body of troops under his command in the two campaigns, was unsuccessful in his operations. He failed of the fortress of *Rhinfeld*, the only place before which he came that was able to make any resistance. From recollecting this arose the importance which he ascribed to the surprisal

† surprisal which put this small place into the hands of M. *de Contades* this war. Those who were thoroughly well acquainted with Marshal *de Belle-isle* say, that he would have set much less value on this conquest, if the *French* General had made it with open force.

AFTER the disgrace of M. * *Chauvelin*, the Count *de Belle-isle* became the Cardinal's sole confident in military affairs, and his vigorous imagination displaying itself with boldness to a Minister whose own was much confined, he made himself esteemed as highly in foreign affairs, and in all political objects. M. *de Belle-isle* then governed in the name of the old Cardinal. If he had then undertaken, as he did afterwards, the office of Secretary of State, many people imagine that he would have had that of M. *Chauvelin*. But I think them mistaken. I have strong reasons for having no doubt that he wished for that part of the inheritance of his rival in favour; and

† [This town, which belongs to the Landgrave of *Hesse-Cassel*, gives name to a county, and title of Prince to a branch of the family of *Hesse*. The *French* under Marshal *Tallard* attacked it in vain in 1692. It was taken December 1, 1758, by the Marquess *de Castries*, and the garrison, consisting of 700 men, were made prisoners of war. It is remarkable that M. *de Belle-isle* left his estate to the officer who took this fortress. See p. 33.]

* [*Chauvelin* was disgraced in 1735 for supporting the interests of the *Q. of Spain*. See Vol. I. p. 323—6.]

I impute to his views upon it the delay of nominating a new chief of that department, which, in the mean time, was entrusted to two able subalterns, Messrs. *de Chavigny* and *du Tillet*, under the direction of the Marshal-Duke *de † Noailles*. The Count *de Belle-isle* was not Secretary of State, because he could not overcome the just repugnance which the Cardinal had to lay the Court of *Vienna* under the necessity of treating with a man whom she hated. The Minister had sincerely reconciled the King his master with the Emperor; he had hopes of strengthening the reconciliation of the two houses; and the Count *de Belle-isle*, educated in the system of their rivalry, had just set a lasting mark upon himself in the Imperial Court by an attempt, the odium of which was personally fixed upon him. He was Governor of *Metz*, and of the country of *Messin*. Having no less ambition than the famous Duke *d'Epernon*, who had made that Government a kind of patrimony, he hoped to be no less fortunate; and acting with this view, he wished to give that place all the importance of which it was capable. Though a frontier town, *Metz* is but seldom the place of rendezvous for the *French* armies, because then the siege of *Lux-*

† [See Vol. i, p. 327. Note.]

embourg must be the first operation of the campaign; which is too hazardous a beginning. The Count fancied that he could remedy this inconvenience. Whether he had a choice of a great number of expedients, I cannot tell; certain it is, that he did not chuse the most honourable, though perhaps it was the least dangerous. He contrived a conspiracy of some *Luxembourgers*, who were, on a day and at the moment appointed, to set fire to the barracks, magazines, and principal houses, and to reduce the city to ashes. This was in 1731. *Europe* was in profound peace; and this peace of eighteen years had lulled the Powers of the continent into a security, which went so far as to make them neglect the military precautions. However, the conspiracy was luckily discovered: the traitors were punished with death; and the chief of them accused the Governor of *Metz* of having planned this whole scene of iniquity. As he had had the prudence to give them no evidence against him but that of their accomplices, he treated them all as calumniators. The Cardinal was not one who would disavow him; and I know not whether the circumstances of the case required it. But in this, *M. de Belle-isle* seems to me to have been strangely wanting to himself; when the Court of *Vienna* published the account which treated him

him without reserve, he was silent. After his denial, which could not be invalidated but by the depositions of persons who were dead, it was equally easy and indispensable for him to have used the highest language in his apology.

WHEN Fortune is for a man, the most sinister events become favourable to him. That just hatred of the Court of *Vienna* for M. de *Belle-isle* preserved him from the shame of capitulating for the *French* army at *Prague*, a disgrace, after which he probably would not have had the confidence to canvass for the Command and the Ministry. From 1737 to 1740 he had so much cultivated the favour and gained the confidence of the Cardinal, that he became his whole Council, and had over the mind of that Minister the ascendant of a pedagogue. But the old man, though always timid, was not always tractable; and he had an habitual vice to which the *Mentor* was obliged to accommodate himself, that he might not frighten him. M. de *Belle-isle* took care not to display all his vigorous imagination as to the † Pragmatic war, before a Minister who made oeconomy the first virtue of

† [So called from the *Pragmatic Sanction*, which confirmed to the Queen of *Hungary* the dominions of her father, and which had been guaranteed by almost all the Powers of *Europe*.]

a Statesman. He only offered to his Eminence the brilliant and least expensive parts of his vast project. Sure to dazzle and delude him by a good bargain, he contracted the operations, and abated what the most successful must cost. M. de Voltaire is mistaken in asserting that "for the carrying on that war the Count de Belle-isle demanded of the Cardinal a hundred thousand men, and a hundred millions§." The command was first offered to Marshal de Coigny; and that demand was his reply. The Cardinal having plainly declared that the King would not go beyond forty, the Count de Belle-isle procured the expedition to be offered to the late Marshal de Broglio. He, who had at heart, all his life, the surprisal of the * *Secchia*, which he accused M. de Coigny of having ignorantly and maliciously occasioned, was delighted with supplanting his rival, and

§ [M. de Voltaire, according to this author, must also "be mistaken in asserting, that" the Marshal and his "brother had no interest with the old Cardinal, who "was seemingly at the head of an undertaking which "he disapproved, and that he even opposed it so far as "to write to the King, advising him against entering "into their measures." See *Age of Lewis XV*, Ch. 6.]

* [In the war of *Italy*, in 1734, the Imperialists under Count *Konigseg* passed this river so suddenly, and attacked M. de Broglio so vigorously in his quarters, that he narrowly escaped only in his shirt and slippers. The raillery which the loss of his breeches occasioned is still remembered.]

tripping

tripping up his heels. He urged nearly the same objections as the other. But M. de *Belle-isle* made him so many fine promises, that he assented. It is not doubted, that, in fact, the Count made every thing depend on engaging the timid old Cardinal; and that he flattered himself with carrying him afterwards as far as he pleased. Thus a perpetual distinction is to be made between his imagination and his judgment, between his boldness and his prudence.

THE bâton of Marshal of *France*, and the rank of Duke, repaid the Count for the splendid hopes which he had given the Cardinal. Invested with these dignities, he sat out more like a courier than a negociator, traversing the Courts of *Germany*, and shewing himself in their Cabinet-councils. We will not, my Lord, dispute his gaining the votes for transferring the Imperial Crown into the House of *Bavaria*, and appearing at *Francfort*, as Ambassador from *France*, with a prodigality little inferior to that of the heir of

† [“Marshal *Belle-isle* appeared at *Francfort*, rather as an Elector of the first rank than as an Ambassador from *France*. The Elector of *Mentz*, who presided at the election, gave him the right hand in his own palace, and the Ambassador, in his own hôtel, gave the right hand to none but the Electors, taking the precedence of all other Princes.” *Voltaire*.]

Cardinal

Cardinal † *Porto-carrero*, who was Ambassador from *Spain*. But we, as politicians, shall value the first operation, and your Lordship, as a great Peer, will esteem the second. Let us then follow him in his career, in which I observe a great number of false steps, which the people of *England* would not excuse even in one of their favourites.

WHAT was the object, what was the advantage, of his journey to *Bavaria*? He saw at *Munich* the Prince who was to be his principal personage: he had some conversations with the *Bavarian* Ministers. But he took no cognisance of the real state of *Bavaria*, a cognisance which was indispensable. For three years, the Elector received subsidies from *France* and *Spain*, for the support of thirty thousand regular troops. The authenticating the employment of that money was of great importance; yet the Marshal did nothing in it. In his plan he depended on a *Bavarian* army of thirty thousand men, on numerous magazines abundantly supplied. There were scarce seven thousand soldiers on foot in the Electorate; and there were not even places assigned for the laying up provisions and stores. The Marshal, in haste to

† [Prime Minister of *Spain*, at the end of the last and the beginning of the present century.]

repair somewhere else, left *Munich* with the ideas which he carried thither. The Cardinal, nevertheless, received a long dispatch from him, in which his appearing in *Bavaria* was reckoned a stroke of great policy.

YOUR Lordship knows what share the Marshal's rhetoric had in the resolutions of the Court of *Berlin*. You recollect the fine game which he played in *Saxony*. In the other part of the Empire he found an antagonist as lively, as active, but, in other respects, of very different talents. This was the Count *de Co-bentzel*, now Minister to the Government of the *Low Countries*. This Statesman was then no more than thirty-two or thirty-three years of age. But he had for many years had all the materials for his business. Eloquent in the principal languages of *Europe*, which he spoke with purity, equally versed in history and in law, peculiarly skilled in adapting himself to the tastes, the humour, the turn of mind of the *German* Princes, and of their Ministers, capable of applying himself to business, as if he hated pleasure, and of giving himself up to pleasure, as if he had a disgust for business, rising early in the morning, going late to bed, sleeping little, never deferring to the next the work of the present day, and labouring with no less relish than ease; inexhaustible in conversation, as well

well as indefatigable in Council, knowing how to enliven the most serious subjects, and to bring to his views the most indifferent discourse; always employed, without ever having the air of being so, a lover of all the arts, a connoisseur in most of them, in a word, the favourite of all with whom he was obliged to have connections, and so judiciously complaisant, as to make them all think that he had only seen them to advantage: such was the negociator to whom Marshal *de Belle-isle* had no arms to oppose but gigantic promises, a great fund of conceit, and numerous couriers. If we add, that the *Frenchman* was moved by his private ambition only, while the *Austrian*, whose father had been a particular favourite of the Emperor *Charles VI*, considered himself as peculiarly devoted to the Princess his daughter and heiress; we shall be less surprised at Marshal *de Belle-isle*, after the election of *Charles VII*, being unsuccessful in the Courts of *Germany*; at the Circle of *Bavaria* being kept in a perfect neutrality by the Archbishop of *Saltzburg* the Coadjutor; at the Elector of *Cologne* selling himself to the *English** against his own brother the Empe-

* ["His selling himself to the *English* was not very honourable, but he always believed, that an Emperor created by *France* could not support himself, and therefore sacrificed the interests of his brother to his own." *Voltaire.*]

ror; at the whole Empire seeing with a frigid or sullen indifference its Chief despoiled of his hereditary dominions, reduced to subsist on a pension from *France* in an Imperial City, and at length dying in a hired house at *Francfort*†, overwhelmed with disgraces and chagrin. It is with the cabinets of Princes as with their armies, which are worth as much as their chief is worth.

It might naturally be supposed that Marshal *de Broglio* would look with an evil eye on the Cheat, who, by his fair promises, fallen to nothing, had engaged him in an enterprize, of which he thought he could not advantageously get clear. But this tended fast to an open war, when M. *de Belle-isle*, his colleague in the army, there assumed the air and tone of a man who alone was in the confidence of the Minister, and in the secrets of the Cabinet. M. *de Broglio*, whose experience was much greater in military than in political affairs, saw, however, clearly enough into the latter

† [“The Emperor died at *Munich*, Jan. 20. 1745, leaving this lesson to the world, that the summit of human grandeur may be the height of calamity. He had only been unfortunate since he became an Emperor. Nature, from that moment, had been more cruel to him than Fortune. A complication of painful disorders rendered his misfortunes more violent by his corporal sufferings, and they jointly carried him to the grave.” *Voltaire*.]

department,

department, to guess the feint of the siege of *Neifs*, and the separate treaty which interest dictated to the King of *Prussia*. He mentioned it to his colleague; he wrote of it to the Cardinal: they thought they did him a favour in not laughing at him.

WHAT is most striking in the part which Marshal *de Belle-isle* acted in *Bohemia*, is that passion for negotiating with the Court of *Vienna*, while he might have been certain of obtaining no favour from her. The Count *de Königsegg* had plainly declared to him, that the only offer which the Queen would make to the army of *France* was, to receive her as prisoner of war. He had had the same reply to some new propositions. He knew that the Cardinal threw all the odium of this war on him. In short, he had given it as his last word that the King's army would know how to support or to change the face of affairs by its courage. However, to the moment of his leaving *Prague*, he kept at *Vienna* an agent, who did not fail to renew his solicitations, and to receive refusals, by an acceptable agreement.

† [“This old officer commanded against the *Turks* in *Hungary*, and against the *French* in *Italy* and *Germany*, and had the command of eight squadrons of *Austrians* in the battle of *Fontenoy* in 1745”. *Age of Lewis XV*, Ch. 15.]

I SHALL say nothing, my Lord, of the siege of *Prague*, which has made so much noise. The Marshal's retreat has its merit†, were it only for the secrecy of the dispositions, and the rapidity of the execution. It is certain that it was not a flight. But it would have been much more honourable to the General, and much less painful to the little army, if the march had been less forced. The Marshal, in his account, congratulates himself on not losing a man by the attacks of the enemy. But he owns that he left on the road all who could not follow him. Is there any General, retreating with the start of the enemy, who could not pay himself the same compliment at the same price? The briskest skirmishes of Prince *Lobkowitz* would not have cost him the quantity of baggage, and the three thousand soldiers, whom he abandoned in the snows. The Marshal took his resolution boldly; he directed his march ably. But he marched too fast for a great Captain.

† [“The affairs of the *French* were come to such a pass, that a retreat, which appeared impracticable, was deemed a singular piece of good fortune. Marshal *Belle-isle* saved the remains of the *French* army, who were besieged in *Prague*, by conducting thirteen thousand men from thence to *Egra*, through a bye-road of thirty-eight leagues, surrounded by ice, and in sight of the enemy.” *Age of Lewis XV, Ch. 7.*]

As to this last article, he had nothing in common with *Xenophon*.

It is a pretty general opinion here, that *France* would not have extricated herself more fortunately from the Pragmatic war, than from the present war in *Germany*, if Count *de Saxe* had not projected the diversion in the *Low Countries*. *M. de Belle-isle* was far from seeming to relish this plan, which ruined his own, at the same time that it saved him the disgrace of having entirely failed in it. His situation became very embarrassing. He saw the King's esteem declaring itself in favour of his rival; he perceived nothing but obscurity in all that his lively imagination presented him on the side of *Germany*, where he still promised to perform great things. A wonderful unravelling was then to be wished by him, not being able to extricate himself from the scrape by ordinary means. His complaints of his being surprised by the *Hanoverian* Post-master of † *Osterode* had no other effect, than the rendering the adventure more disagreeable to him, by magnifying the oversight of the Statesman and General. He was asked, under what title the Marshal-Courier was going to *Berlin*, and the Chief was ridiculed for projecting an invasion of the dominions of *Hanover*,

† [*M. de Voltaire* calls this village "*Elbinrode*."]

without knowing its frontiers and dependences.

We did this celebrated prisoner more honour than he deserved, when we refused to let him be ransomed, agreeably to the cartel*: this was giving him the importance which he impatiently longed to annex to his operations, and to the interruption of them. Your Lordship will recollect that he was nobly lodged and entertained at *Windſor*; that he was served in the Castle by the Officers of his *Britannic Majesty's* kitchen, and that he had the attention shewn him of having those who spoke the best *French*. The chief Clerk was a man of little application, but of great sense, and invincible probity. His name was *Fraigneau*. You know his brother, who is one of the best scholars at *Cambridge*, and one of our most respectable † Ecclesiastics. This whole family is honesty itself. They came to us from *Rochelle*, at the time of the revocation of the edict of *Nantes*. When I was acquainted

* ["The Minister of *George II* eluded the ransom by a strange and unheard-of evasion. He declared that he regarded Messrs. *de Belle-isle* as prisoners of State." *Voltaire*.)

† [He was sometime *Greek Professor*, afterwards private tutor to the present Lord *Bolingbroke*, with whom he travelled, and is at present Vicar of *Batterſea* and *Beckenham*.]

with

with the chief Clerk in 1756, he was cruelly tormented by the gout, by which he was choaked the same year, in his way to *Bath*. You would never suspect a man of this character, and in such a situation, of inventing lies, great or small, to keep up or embellish conversation. I know, from this accomplished man, that the Marshal, when prisoner, took a liking to his company, that he often desired it, and always continued it long. "I had a mean opinion," he told me, "of the *French* General's judgment, when I discovered in him a passion for talking to me, (to me a very skilful confectioner, but an ignorant politician, and a still more pitiful officer,) of his splendid operations in the field and the Cabinet. He displayed them to me with as much pleasure, and as minutely, as if I had been a Sir *Robert Walpole*, or a Duke of *Marlborough*."

WHEN the Marshal returned to *France*, he had some employment; either that he might not exclaim at the Court, or because the Secretary at War had the weakness to fear him in the Cabinet. He took the command of the army against the *Austrians* and *Savoyards*, who had attacked *Provence*. Till his passage of the *Var*, the Marshal deserved applause; because he advanced, holding, as one may say, the compass in his hand. He seemed to

pique himself only on prudence, the sole talent perhaps which art and nature denied him. As soon as he was at the foot of the *Alps*, he seemed to resume his natural genius, he reckoned as nothing those high mountains thick set with fortresses; and he formed the plan of attacking *Turin*. His brother the Chevalier was a man of less parade, but of a genius pretty much of the same stamp. He submissively assented to the gigantic project; and sat out to carry it into execution. He arrived safe at the foot of the *Sietta*, the first of the three fortresses which he must take to open himself a way to *Turin*. He depended on preventing the reinforcement which the King of *Sardinia* was sending thither; without being aware that this reinforcement, if prevented, would fall back on the second fortress, and would render the defence of it more formidable. He hastened to attack a post in his front, which, his officers assured him, they should carry without loss, if he would let them wheel round it. He was there killed, like a rash desperado, that is to say, giving proofs of bravery which he was never suspected of wanting*. His

* [*"Belle-isle*, in despair, tore up the palisadoes; and being wounded in both his hands, he still tugged at the stakes with his teeth, when he received a mortal blow. He had often said, that a General ought not to survive a defeat, and he proved too clearly that this sentiment was engraven on his heart." *Age of Lewis XV, Ch. 22.*]

troops, who had suffered greatly by his rashness, did not regret his loss. But the Marshal was deeply concerned at it. His firmness is a proof of true heroism; and it does him honour, from whatever source he drew it. He cordially loved this brother, whom he always found a faithful friend, an indefatigable second, and no rival.

PERHAPS the two Crowns would not have been forced into the present war, if Marshal *de Belle-isle* had been the Plenipotentiary of France at the congress of *Aix-la-Chapelle*. As a Minister, inexhaustibly minute, he certainly would not have left the knot of *Acadia* and the *Ohio* to be untied by Commissaries. One cannot tell how to account for his indifference as to this splendid character, to which he was urged by the example of Marshal *d'Uxelles*, first Plenipotentiary at *Utrecht*. From 1748 to 1756 he led a private life, as honourable as a man of his rank could lead. He was still employed in the general business of Europe; this was a passion habitual to him. He neglected none of his numerous correspondences, and he divided his time between his city of *Metz* and his estate of *Gisors*, the em-

§ ["A man of a cool and reserved temper, and though not of a bold and enterprising turn, yet extremely discreet in his conduct. He died in 1730." *Voltaire.*]

bellishments

bellishments of which were his chief amusement. He was placed in 1758 at the head of the War-Office. His letters are encomiums on his love of business: the events are no encomiums on his abilities. He would doubtless have been transmitted with more lustre to posterity, if he had died five or six years sooner. Perhaps the nation now thinks that she would then have sustained a considerable loss.

THIS, my Lord, is what I would say of Marshal *de Belle-isle* before our juries, if there existed in *England* a tribunal for the dead, as we are assured there did among the ancient *Egyptians*. If I conjecture the principal motive of your curiosity, and of your intreaties to induce me to satisfy it, I beg your Lordship to exhibit my picture to your new friend, in order to give him a relish for my frankness. He will excuse my not having flattered his relation, when he knows that it is my disposition to chuse rather to be silent than evasive as to what I think true. Either conceal my letter from him, or shew it him as it is.

I WILL finish this compilation with two remarkable passages of the unfortunate M. *Fouquet*. This Minister, whom, notwithstanding the cabal of *Le Tellier* and *Colbert* to promote his execution, his judges did not condemn to death, was sentenced by the majority to perpetual banishment, attended with the confiscation

cation of his effects. This second part of his punishment was manifestly unjust, an excess of severity indulged to the intrigue and passion of his powerful enemies. They were not, however, satisfied with it, and they prevailed on the young King to add to it another much more shocking. Under the title of clemency, he was told, in the King's name, that the punishment was commuted, and perpetual imprisonment substituted for banishment. A strange act of clemency! As if, out of *France*, the whole universe were a closer prison than a citadel! M. *Fouquet* was confined in the citadel of *Pignerol*, in which, a few years after, the celebrated *Lausun*, privately married to *Mademoiselle de Montpensier* †,

† ["It is a singular instance of the power of custom and prejudice, that, at a time when all the married women were allowed to have gallants, the grand-daughter of *Henry IV*† was refused even a husband. That Princess, after having rejected so many Sovereigns, and having entertained hopes of marrying *Lewis XIV*,† was, at the age of forty-three, desirous to make the fortune of a private gentleman. She obtained leave to marry *Pequin de Caumont*, Count de *Lausun*, Colonel-General of Dragoons. . . .

† [She was the daughter of *Gaston*, Duke of *Orleans*, that King's younger son, and consequently first cousin to *Lewis XIV*.]

† [In the civil war (1652) *Mademoiselle* for ever ruined herself with the King her cousin, by directing the cannon of the *Bastille* to be fired on his troops; and Cardinal *Mazarin*, who knew her extreme desire to espouse a crowned head, said, "*Those cannon have killed her husband.*"

"The

was also imprisoned. The Commandant allowed his prisoners to eat together, and to pass there the best part of the day. *Lausun*, the most specious man of his time, having

“ The Princess gave all her wealth, computed at twenty millions, to the Count, together with four Dutchies, the Sovereignty of *Dombes*, the County of *Eu*, and the Palace of *Orleans*, called the *Luxembourg*. She preserved nothing, but resigned herself wholly to the pleasing idea of making the man she loved richer than any King ever made a subject. The contract was drawn up, and *Lausun* was, for a day, Duke of *Montpensier*; nothing remained but to sign. In short, every thing was ready, when the King, assailed by the Princes, Ministers, and enemies of a man whose prosperity was too great to be borne, retracted his promise, and forbade the alliance. He had written to foreign Courts to apprise them of the marriage, and now he wrote to inform them that it was broken off. He had been censured for permitting it, and now he was equally censured for forbidding it. He was afflicted at the unhappiness which he caused the Princess; but the same Prince, whom his breach of promise had so affected, imprisoned *Lausun*, in November 1670, in the castle of *Pignerol*; for having privately married the Princess, whom, a few months before, he had given him leave to marry publicly. . . .

“ After having languished ten years in prison, he was at length released; but not till Madam de *Montespan* had prevailed on the Princess to bestow the Sovereignty of *Dombes*, and the County of *Eu*, on the Duke of *Mayne*, then an infant, who enjoyed them after the death of that Princess. Her motive for these donations was the hope that M. *de Lausun* would be acknowledged for her husband; but she was deceived: the King only permitted her to give this secret and unfortunate husband the lands of *St. Fargeau* and *Thiers*, which, though considerable,

one day related his Court exploits ; how he had been beloved by the grand-daughter of *Henry IV* ; how his contract of marriage with her had been drawn up, and signed by the King ; how his Majesty had broken his word with him ; how he had reproached the Monarch with insolence ; how the Monarch had thought proper to excuse himself for it to his subjects, and in foreign Courts ; how, at length, he had exhausted his master's patience, who had sent him to the *Bastille* : the Super-

considerable, were not sufficient for *Lausun*. She was reduced to the mortification of being his wife in private, and of being ill treated by him in public. Equally unhappy at Court and at home, which is the common effect of violent passions, she died in 1693.

" The Count *de Lausun* went over to *England* in the year 1688. Always destined to extraordinary adventures, he conducted the Queen of *James II* into *France*, with her son, then in the cradle. He was created a Duke. He commanded in *Ireland*, but with little success ; and returned in more reputation for his adventures, than for his personal merit. He died in a very advanced age, quite forgotten, as is generally the case with all those who have experienced great changes of fortune, without having performed any great actions themselves." *Age of Lewis XIV, Chap. 25.*

Similar to this, in our own country, and no less arbitrary and unjust, was the close imprisonment of the Earl of *Hertford* in the *Tower*, for nine years, by Queen *Elizabeth*, on account of his privately marrying Lady *Catherine Grey*, sister to Lady *June*, and, like *Mademoiselle de Montpensier*, of the blood-royal.]

intendant,

intendant, who, in all this, did not recognise the Court in which he had lived, imagined that *Lausun's* head was turned; and signified as much to the other prisoners, by now and then putting his finger to his forehead. They let him continue in his mistake; which more than once furnished them with amusement, M. *Fouquet*, to the last, treating *Lausun* as a man who required his utmost attention, and to whom he owed his utmost compassion.

THE Annalists confidently fix the Superintendent's death at *Pignerol*. But there still exists in the Marquisate of *Saluces*, and in *Dauphiny*, a popular tradition, that the prisoner made his escape, and that he attained to an almost miraculous old age, under the habit, and in the profession, of a hermit†. Men of sense reject this tradition, which proves, however, that the people entertained some affection for the prisoner, and that his disgrace had not entirely plunged him in oblivion.

I am, &c.

† [“ All the historians say, that *Fouquet* died in the castle of *Pignerol* in 1680; but *Gourville*, in his *Memoirs*, asserts, that he was released from prison some time before his death. The Countess *de Vaux*, his daughter-in-law, had before strongly averred this fact to me, though the contrary is believed among his own family. Thus we know not in what place died an unfortunate man, whose least actions, while he was in power, were striking.” *Age of Lewis XIV, Chap. 24.*]

LETTER

LETTER XX.

TO MR. GARRICK.

That, in such a man as he is, two characters in his own country are distinguishable, that in France there is no such distinction. What is the opinion of the Theatre at Paris. what is the opinion of it at London. Raillery on the former. Extravagant comparison of an Actor with a Hangman. Story in praise of the Elector Palatine. Dispute of a Lawyer at Paris in behalf of the Actors. Its consequences. Remarkable favour granted by the Court to the Comedians of the French Theatre. Important broil between two Actresses. Conditions of the pacification. Banter on ennobling the Theatrical Gentry. Curious conversation with a Frenchman on Plays.

Essential difference between the English and French Theatres, between the audiences in the two nations. What are the respective parts of the Author and of the Actor in a Play. Inutility of long speeches to a genteel and fashionable audience.

SIR,

SIR,

YOU are a greater personage in *Europe* than you imagine. Your election, if it had taken place, would have made a revolution in *France*, or at least it would have occasioned there a schism. Your friends, my dear *Garrick*, are sorry that * your canvass has not succeeded; because they know that your heart and mind are unlike your profession, and are infinitely above your fortune. Convinced that the patriotism and disinterestedness, with which you would have acted in the *English* House of Commons, would have equalled the propriety and truth with which you act in the Theatre of the Metropolis, they would have seen the good citizen sit at *Westminster* with as much pleasure as they see the excellent actor play at *Drury-lane*. In *England*, we know how to distinguish the different points of view of an object which has many, and can observe without confounding them. The people of this country have not reflection enough for so

* Probably because this Mr. *Garrick*, who is reckoned worth above sixty thousand pounds sterling, offered himself a candidate to represent some borough in Parliament.

[This being mentioned in the news-papers, might, perhaps, gain credit abroad, though, at the time, it was little believed at home.]

com-

complicated an operation. The illustrious *Voltaire*, who is the fashionable teacher, and who sometimes displays his wit at the expence of his judgment, would have blown his loudest trumpet, and have exclaimed, in the strain of his brother † *Lourdis*, "*Frenchmen*, blush for shame; and see the judicious *English* placing among their Legislators one of those men whom you condemn to infamy." The same opinion, my dear Sir, would have been formed, as was in regard to Messrs. *Prior* and *Addison*, of whom it was said, that "we made them Statesmen in gratitude for their fine verses." Petitions and memorials would have been presented to his Most Christian Majesty, to induce him to open the Church and the ‡ Palace to the players, and to give the nation the glorious advantage of ranking her Actors among her Magistrates and Canons. The Gentlemen of the Parliament would have made remonstrances; the Gentlemen of the Clergy would have issued mandates: The Arrêts and Excommunications of old would have appeared again in a new dress. The Lawyers of taste would have published Pleas of vindication,

† A principal character in the poem of *The Maid of Orleans*, last edition.

‡ [The place in which the Parliament meets, and the Courts of Justice are held, at *Paris*.]

the Wits would have skirmished in prose and verse. The coffee-houses of *Paris*, and the ante-chambers of *Versailles*, would have removed the cause from the boxes of the play-house into the hôtels of the quarter of *St. Germain*, and into the shops of the street of *St. Honoré*, from whence it would have come to the stalls. This is nearly the same road which was taken by the Pope's famous Bull, though the five propositions of † *Jansenius*, and the hundred and one of § *Quénel*, had no great connection with fishwomen and porters.

† [In 1552, *Michael Bay*, or *Baius*, a Doctor of *Leu-wain*, took upon him to maintain some propositions on grace and predestination, which were condemned as heretical by Pope *Pius V*, in 1567. These notions were afterwards defended by *Cornelius Jansenius*, Bishop of *Ypres*, in a large posthumous volume on *St. Augustin*. Five of his propositions were condemned by Pope *Innocent X*.]

§ [Father *Quénel*, of the Oratory, in 1671, composed a book of pious reflections on the New Testament, which containing some maxima which appeared favourable to *Jansenism*, the book, at the instance of the *Jesuits*, was condemned by Pope *Clement XI*, and the author was imprisoned in the *Low Countries* (to which he had retired) by *Philip V*. But having escaped from prison, *Quénel* died at *Amsterdam* in 1719, in an extreme old age, after having settled some *Jansenist* churches in *Holland*. "Thirty pages in his book," says *Voltaire*, "changed or softened, would have spared his country much dispute and animosity; but he would then have been less celebrated."]

THE raillery, my dear *Garrick*, is not extravagant. In every country in the world, there is nothing so trivial, that the passions do not blend themselves with it, and they are the stronger as to the trifles which they seize, in proportion to the want of serious subjects able to engage them. The dignity of the Princes and Princesses of the scenes is as warm a party-affair at *Paris*, as that of the unity of the Parliaments in the rest of the kingdom. With us, where the Theatre is frequented by an immense multitude of *English* of all ranks, it is supposed to be intended for recreation, for diversion; and sensible people are well satisfied with it, when this is done without prejudice to morals. It seems to me, that this is taking the institution of the Theatre in its true point of view. In *France*, where it is the resort of a few idle people, almost always the same, it is insisted, that the *French* stage is the school of morality and virtue for the nation; that it is the source from which the nation may draw the exalted ideas which form the patriot, and the amiable talents to which society owes its delights. If you ask me, who are the supporters of an opinion which to you appears unwarrantable, I shall answer, that we must not count them, but if we weigh them, they make a very powerful party. The chief of them are scholars by profession.

These

These gentlemen, distributed into small societies, every one of which thinks it constitutes the Public, and gives itself out as such, offer their opinion in that peremptory style which is peculiar to them; and this gives them reputation in the Capital and in the Provinces, where Academies threaten to become as numerous as Brotherhoods were of old. On the plan formed by this Public in miniature, the people of the *French Theatre* form a new College of Professors, who dedicate their talents and labour to the public instruction; and the nation ought to lament the blindness of the people, the prejudices of the Clergy, the obstinacy of the Magistrates, to whom those respectable preceptors are still Comedians * as of old. Thus, you see, there are two parties directly opposite. Without entering into a discussion of the respective reasons, I would judge of them by the progress which the nation has made in the heroic and social character, for the twenty-five or thirty years past that M. de *Voltaire* has thought proper to set up a new national school in the old tennis-courts which serve for Play-houses. But

* The Players in *France* are not subjected to the ordinary Judge of the Police. They have their peculiar laws, which differ from the laws of the Kingdom in some essential points; and it is by these laws that they are judged in the civil tribunals.

these remarks would perhaps be prohibited by the Government, if they were published: which promises, that, in spite of the inconstancy of the country, the dispute will long continue.

THE honest *English* frankly own to the admirable *Garrick*, that they love, without prizing it too highly, the profession which he, through levity, embraced in his youth, and to which he adheres, through necessity, in a more advanced age. The judicious *Garrick* is too much flattered in being able, by his personal merit, to overcome a prejudice which was unfavourable to him, and by the superiority of his talents to do honour to a profession which never does honour to an ordinary man. Every Player, who, in either respect, has the least resemblance of my friend *Garrick*, will think as he thinks, and will be one of the first to laugh at the champions who would break lances for the dignity of the Theatrical troop, and for the honour of its exercises.

In *France*, where learned and virtuous Actors are very scarce, and where there are very few Actresses who seek reputation by the regularity of their manners, the patrons of the Players are far from asking of the nation a personal regard for their dependents. They had much rather do it by ennobling at once the profession. I will give you their principal

pal argument. What is more useful to a nation than the picture of strong passions and their fatal effects, of great crimes and their chastisement, of great virtues and their reward? Now, Players profess to exhibit these pictures: what men, consequently, are more useful to the nation? But men are respectable in proportion as they are useful: what men, consequently, are more respectable than Players? If you do not relish this way of reasoning, that is your concern: For my part, I shall oppose the singularity of the resort of which it is susceptible.

I have seen the Elector *Palatine*, a Prince who unites the *English* solidity of mind with the *German* goodness of heart and the *French* politeness. I have seen him invite to his country-house a miserable Jew of *Francfort*, whose business is the carrying post-letters from house to house in that city, but who is a skilful player at chess†. His Highness detains him several days, sometimes weeks, makes his party with him very regularly, and

† [About the year 1755, when the Marquess *de Mirepoix* was Ambassador in *England*, and had a house at *Chiswick*, a school-master there, who was recommended to him as a good chess-player, was, in consequence, recommended by his Excellency to the *English* Ministry so effectually, that the Chaplainship of *Hampton-Court* Palace was given, as a reward, to his antagonist.]

sends him back, with a gratuity, to resume his business at *Francfort*, without being troubled about the degree of respect which he gives him in society. This Prince seems to me a model to be followed in the valuation of men of genius. I prize them according to the connections which they form out of their profession, concerning which I will not cavil with them, when they apply their abilities to it. At *Schwetzingen*, the Jew was to the Elector *Palatine* a great chess-player, a suitable companion. At *Francfort*, he was no more than a letter-carrier, as valuable as an honest letter-carrier can be. My friend *Garrick* is to me at *Drury-lane* no more than an excellent actor. Every where else, I have occasionally discovered him to be a man of great sense, a man of honour, a good citizen. I love and respect him in all these characters, without suffering his profession to cast a shade over these excellent talents.

THE following, my dear Sir, seems to me the characteristic of our judgment, with regard to persons whose chief reputation is some superior talent, of whatever kind it may be. People of taste and fashion in this country have not the least idea of this logic. They think that genius includes all encomiums, as if it comprised all virtues, or could supply their place. The bulk of the nation, on the

VOL. II. E contrary,

contrary, too tenacious of old prejudices, refuse to see any thing but genius in the man whom they distinguish; and they confine all their sentiments of the artist to the esteem which they owe to the art. A Barrister, who had not in appearance too many clients at the Palace, thought proper last year to draw up on his own account the case of the Actors with the Public, and to determine in their favour against the Magistrates and the Clergy. The Society of Barristers were much displeased at it, and struck the name of the offender out of their register. Immediately the General of the wits took the field against the Barristers; and it is not his fault that the most learned and sensible men in the Kingdom are not thought errant fools. The degraded Barrister took refuge among those heroes, of whom he had made himself the champion. The † mistress of *Tancred* admitted him among her dependents. The patrons of the *French Stage* have procured the Lawyer another occupation which amply indemnifies him for the loss of the former. Both sides have gone into extremes. The

† [The actresses who played *Almida* in *Voltaire's* tragedy of *Tancred*, which was translated from the *French*, by a daughter of the late Mr. Mallet, (now the wife of M. *Celestia*, a gentleman of *Genoa*), and acted at *Drury-lane* house last winter.]

reason is, that, among the *French*, dress signifies nothing; and a large perriwig, and a long robe, only disguise the national want of consequence. The Actor avails himself of the passion of the two parties, by making the contempt of the one his recommendation to the other; and he is so lucky as to find that his recommendation scarce ever fails of its effect. The Court has already given Letters of Nobility to an † Opera singer, without requiring him to sacrifice his employment to his new rank: The *French* Theatre reckons itself beyond comparison superior to the Academy of Music. Its great personages will probably be ennobled, when they ask it. But they will still be excommunicated, and . . . 'till a good air and a good taste become the taste and air of the whole nation; 'till a Declaration of the King, well and duly registered by the Parliaments, allowed and acknowledged in an assembly of the Clergy, shall open the door of the Churches and of honours to the joyous Company. This revolution has great difficulties, but it is not impossible. The *French* are an imitative people. If the Pope was

* The *Sieur Chasse*y, Counter-tenor at the Opera. He quitted the Theatre soon after he was ennobled; because he thought himself not paid in proportion to his worth. He afterwards returned] to it on the Manager's own terms.

pleased to give a Canonry to *Harlequin*; if the Imperial Chancery should dispatch to *Crispin* the patent of a Baron of the Holy Empire, do you think, my good friend, that your admission into the *English* House of Commons would be of no consequence to this country?

WHILE I am in the humour of talking to you, my dear *Garrick*, I will give you the substance of a conversation which I lately had with a man of quality, who does himself the honour to be one of the † *Familiars* of the *French* Stage.

I WAS going to make a very good use of my morning, when one of those fine Gentlemen by profession, who think they copy our young Nobility by traversing the streets till noon in a slovenly dress, did me the honour to come and invite me to breakfast. I scarce remembered having seen the personage. He, nevertheless, embraced me with the greatest effusion of tenderness. With

† It is well known that the *Grandeos* of *Spain* make interest for the rank of *Familiars*, that is to say, peculiar servants of the Holy Inquisition.

[“In *Spain* alone, there are about two and twenty thousand *Familiars* of the Holy Office. They are called by this name, because they are, as it were, spies scattered up and down every where, who are continually giving true or false information to the Inquisition; upon which, those whom they accuse, are seized and taken up.” *Lady's Travels into Spain, Vol. II. p. 196.*]

the

the eagerness which is shewn to communicate the most interesting news, he rapidly told me a number of anecdotes of the scandalous Chronicle, in which several men and women of the first rank were completely dishonoured. At length he reached his field of battle, and harangued on the Theatres. You may well imagine, that, for a long time, I was only an auditor. Being tired with this, I begged him to give me his opinion of the *English* Theatre. My gentleman did not want pressing, to assure me, upon his honour, that he despised to the last degree our best pieces, no part of which he had ever read; and he let me know, in terms extremely polite, that "an *English* Play is a diversion calculated for the populace. O fyel!" *added he*, "your Comedies are always indecent; and your Tragedies are filthily stuffed with politics, morality, satire, and buffoonery. Is this an entertainment for the virtuous?" I assumed a half serious air; and seeming modestly to doubt whether the Marquess was not in an error, I told him, that 'I suspected that he judged of the *English* Theatre too severely. 'As it was at *Athens*,' I proceeded, 'the Playhouse at *London* is for all the classes of the nation. The peer of the realm, the gentleman, the merchant, the citizen, the clergyman, the tradesman, and their wives, equally

E 3. ' resort

' resort thither to take places, and the crowd
 ' is great. There are every day five or six
 ' thousand spectators, who being relieved by
 ' others every day of the week, and even of
 ' the month, form, at the end of the year, a
 ' total of the most numerous part of the in-
 ' habitants of *London*. There must be some-
 ' thing every day suited to the taste and ca-
 ' pacity of every one. At *Paris* you are
 ' pleased to go to the Play-house for instruc-
 ' tion. We go to it at *London* only for amuse-
 ' ment and diversion; and the far greater
 ' part of the audience would fall asleep, if
 ' they were not strongly affected. This is
 ' the reason why our poets sometimes go be-
 ' yond nature, and why our actors are often
 ' extragant in gesture and expression.' "Very
 " well," replied the *Marquess*, more sensibly than
I expected; "you tell me that it is not without
 " cause that the *English* Theatre is defective.
 " I never had any doubt of it. But you do
 " not prove to me why I am wrong in having
 " little esteem for it, when I know a better."
 I was afraid that my gentleman had not sense
 enough to let the dispute stop there; and I
 answered briskly, that 'the *French* Theatre
 ' was more defective than ours, with much
 ' less reason to be so.' "You may astonish
 " me," returned he, a little stunned at a
 blow which he did not expect; "but I defy
 " you to persuade me of it." "I promise
 ' myself

‘ myself at least to convince you,’ *I replied,*
‘ with an air of the utmost assurance. ‘ You
‘ will allow, that in *France* the entertainment
‘ is only for the Court and the Gentry. At
‘ *Paris*, the Play-house, which is an old ten-
‘ nis-court, contains between fourteen and
‘ fifteen hundred persons, among whom you
‘ may reckon two hundred foreigners, and
‘ four or five hundred *Girls of the world*. The
‘ bulk of the audience is, at most, eight or
‘ nine hundred persons, who resort regularly
‘ to the Theatre from taste or habit, who
‘ have before frequently read the piece, if it
‘ is old, who have almost got it by heart at
‘ the first representations of it, if it is new,
‘ persons whose minds are cultivated, whose
‘ manners are gentle and polite, who attend
‘ chiefly to the purity, the elegance, of the
‘ diction and style, to the brilliancy of the
‘ thoughts, to the management of the plot,
‘ to the gradual progress of situations, to the
‘ natural unravelling of the whole. Give us
‘ at *London* such an audience; and we will
‘ become decent and methodical. Our au-
‘ thors will no longer imitate *Shakespear*, ex-
‘ cept in his force and energy. They will
‘ reform our old pieces: they will compose
‘ them anew. Their tragedies will abound
‘ with sentiment; they will be warm and
‘ interesting. The scenes will consist of agi-
‘ tations

‘ tations of the heart, of perplexities of the
‘ mind, and not of a multiplicity and a com-
‘ plication of incidents more suitable to a ro-
‘ mance than a drama. They will no longer
‘ ridiculously endeavour to extort tears by
‘ their Comedies, to terrify by ghosts in their
‘ Tragedies. They will equally forbear to
‘ make their principal characters tediously
‘ verbose, and to swell with trite jokes the
‘ parts of the foot-man and chamber-maid.
‘ Their unravelling will not be always a mar-
‘ riage; they will learn how to form some
‘ other intrigue besides a monotonous amour.’
“ Ah! Sir,” *interrupted the Marquess*, “ you
“ retort upon us; and indeed very undeser-
“ vedly. What signifies to us the barren-
“ ness or imagination of our authors? Our
“ Theatre will owe nothing more to those
“ gentlemen: it is to its actors that it as-
“ cribes the superiority. You will allow that
“ there are not in *Europe* any talents compar-
“ able to our . . . , to our , &c. Who
“ the deuce sees in a piece, old or new,
“ any thing more than its amusement? It is
“ acted for twenty nights, when the author
“ knows how to accommodate some parti-
“ cular parts to the air and voice of the prin-
“ cipal actors. Twenty nights, Sir! It is
“ a fortune to a poet.” “ I readily believe
‘ it’ *replied I*: “ that fortune, however, would
‘ not

“not have contented either *Corneille* or *Racine*.” “Well;” *said he*; “you talk to me of poets of former times, who employed some years in making a Tragedy. Now, a Tragedy is the work of a month, or of six weeks. They love, or they hate. They are urged by jealousy, love, or revenge. They explain themselves by word of mouth, or by letter, The Devil comes across: some he kills, the rest he marries; and the spectator is too fortunate, if the whole piece be not a mere hash of some of our best romances.”

As I could not suppress a smile, the Marquis thought me staggered, and grew bolder. “Is it not true,” *continued he, settling himself in his chair*, “that a play is a picture? We will introduce the poet for the choice of the subject and for the design: this is making his part large enough. But the attitudes, the colouring, the expression, all the particular beauties, you will allow, depend on the actors, that they hold the pencil, that they are really the painters.” “That,” *I interrupted*, “shall never allow, unless you insist upon it. On the contrary, it seems to me that the actors only display the canvass covered by the poet, that they cloath themselves, as it were, in the dresses which he has given his characters.” “No,

“ Sir, by no means,” *resumed he with petulance.* “ Can you have attended to the incohererent discourse of *Orestes* when mad, of *Herod* † when delirious? Is it not the look, the accent, the attitude of the actor, that disturb you, and plant horror in the bottom of your soul? The actor alone speaks to your eyes, to your senses, to your heart.”

“ I think,” *replied I,* “ that he says what the poet bids him say; that having made himself master of the poet’s idea, he copies well the figure which was drawn for him, and that he only enters into a passion whose steps the expressions prescribe to him. It appears to me that a good player is like a skilful musician, who composes the tune to the words.” “ Ah!” *cried the Marquess,* “ you are taken in your own net; the Opera is not in perfection, till after we have ceased to attend to the words.”

“ Yes,” *said I with a laugh,* I have heard mention made of one of your musicians, who undertook to turn a Gazette into an Opera, without its being discovered.” “ Faith,” *replied the Marquess, convinced of my defeat,* “ that musician is a very skilful one; and he would succeed if he should attempt it. I

† Did our *Englishman* know, that when the poet made *Herod* die of the poison which he took on the stage, the audience cried, *the King drinks*, as if in fact they had paid no attention to the fine speech of that Prince in the agony of remorse?

“ have been at *Vienna*, I was present there at
“ several representations of the *Titus* of *Me-*
“ *tastasio*; I was much pleased with it, and
“ I did not understand a word of the fine
“ verses of the piece. Shall we exhaust our-
“ selves in efforts of imagination, to discover
“ in the voice of an *Italian* singer the tone
“ and air of a *Roman* Emperor? But enough
“ on the subject. If you are not convinced,
“ I allow you to retain your opinion, and I
“ beg you to forgive me mine. I sincerely
“ assure you, that all those tragical haran-
“ gues, of which the vulgar spectators are so
“ fond, are a real loss to such as we, who are
“ well read and acquainted with the world.
“ To seem moved with an act of sublime
“ virtue, is basely to acknowledge, that we
“ do not think ourselves capable of it. To
“ appear astonished at a great crime, is foolishly
“ to say, that we have not studied mankind,
“ nor know how wicked they can be. Now
“ let me ask you, what fine gentleman will
“ so ridiculously expose himself in the face
“ of the public? I give a proof of my good
“ taste by criticising or applauding the Ac-
“ tor. I leave the Author to the gentle-
“ men of the Academy.”

Judge, my dear *Garrick*, between the Mar-
ques and me. Be healthy, if possible; and
believe

believe that I esteem and love you as much as I can and ought, that is to say, as much as you are loved and esteemed by any of your friends.

I am, &c.



L E T T E R XXI.

TO MR. M. MEMBER OF THE BRITISH
PARLIAMENT.

This Letter may be considered as a sequel of Letter VII. Quotation from the Memoirs of Cardinal de Retz, Vol. I, On the Parliaments in convulsion. What right that Prelate has to be believed. Conjectures on the present ferment in the Parliaments. The Ministry's reasons for dissembling the King's discontent. That the French have no right to pretend to the liberty of the English. On what depends the security of Sovereigns and People in all the different forms of Government. Reasons to suspect, that the complaints of the Assemblies are exaggerated. That in all times, and on all kinds of subjects, they deal in hyperbole. Useless clamours against the Financers. Why they are useless. A Lawyer's rigorous advice on the Remonstrances of a certain Parliament. Singular comparison of the remonstrating Courts with the procession of the shrine of St. G  nevi  ve. Just idea of the registering the King's Edicts and Ordinances in Parliament. Error of the Dutch in that respect. What share the right of registering gives the Parliaments in the Legislature.

gislature. Similitudes on that subject. What ought to be the circumspection of those Assemblies in the use of their right of Remonstrance. Value of the Title of the Court of Peers. What is at present the first moving spring of the Parliaments. Enquiry into that deposit of laws so much extolled by M. de Montesquieu. Where there are no laws, there can be no deposit of laws. The Parliaments are convicted by the President Hénault of hazarding quotations in their Remonstrances. The Kings of France oblige themselves to everything towards their people, and promise them nothing. How fond the temper of the French ought to make them of a Government purely monarchical.

See Letter VII.

SIR,

I KNEW that it would not be long before I received from you a vigorous retort. But I have the advantage of ground, which gives me the courage to make head against you. You prove to me, Sir, incontestably, that the Parliaments of France seem now to act on other principles than those of their constitution. I thought I had anticipated your sage suggestion, by telling you that the present way of thinking and talking of those gentlemen is a matter of mode, which gives the enemies of the Monarchy

Monarchy no room to hope. Give me leave to appeal to Cardinal *de Retz*, from the ridicule with which you treat my idea. Behold the picture which he gives of the Parliament of *Paris*, in convulsion, in his time.

‘It is certain,’ *says he*, ‘that there was not one of those who voted in Parliament in the course of that year, (1651,) and in the other Sovereign Assemblies, who had the least foresight, I do not only say of what followed, but of what might follow it. Every thing was said and done in the spirit of law-suits; and as it had the air of chicanery, it also had the pedantry of it, the peculiar essential of which is obstinacy, the direct opposite of flexibility, which, of all qualities, is the most necessary for the management of great affairs; and what is wonderful in it is, that the concurrence, which only can remedy the inconveniences which such a tumultuous meeting may occasion, passed, with such spirits, for a cabal. They themselves made that cabal, without knowing it. The blindness of the well-disposed, in that matter, is generally followed, soon after, by the penetration of those who blend the love of faction with the interests of the public, and who see the future and the possible, at the time when the regular Assemblies only regard the present and the apparent. . . .

‘There

‘ There was not a grain of State-manage-
 ‘ ment in public affairs. The very person
 ‘ who might have been in the intrigues
 ‘ of the Cabinet, was so light, that he deserves
 ‘ not to be weighed. *Longueil*, Counsellor of
 ‘ the Great Chamber, a man of a gloomy,
 ‘ peremptory, and dangerous disposition, and
 ‘ who was better acquainted with the particu-
 ‘ lars of the proceedings of the Parliament,
 ‘ than all the rest of the body together, had
 ‘ thoughts, at that time, of fixing his brother,
 ‘ the President *de Maisons*, in the Super-in-
 ‘ tendancy of the Finances†; and as he repo-
 ‘ sed great confidence in the temper of ‡ *Brouf-*
 ‘ *sel*, simple and easy as a child, it is believed,
 ‘ and I also believe, that he had thoughts, at
 ‘ the first movements of the Parliament, of
 ‘ urging and animating his friend, in order to
 ‘ give himself consequence that way with the
 ‘ Ministers. The President *Viola* was the in-
 ‘ timiate friend of *Chavigny*, who was enraged
 ‘ at Cardinal *Mazarin* and as the Presi-
 ‘ dent was one of the first of his body who
 ‘ expressed warmth, it was suspected that he

† [See p. 91.]

‡ [“ Counsellor and Clerk of the Great Chamber, a man of no capacity, and who had no other merit than that of always opposing the Court. His seizure by the Court irritated the people, and gave rise to the civil war of the *Fronde*.” *Voltaire*.]

' was inspired with it by *Chavigny*. . . .
 ' During the three months blockade of
 ' *Paris*, the Parliament met every morning,
 ' and frequently even in the afternoon. No-
 ' thing was discussed there, at least in general,
 ' but subjects so trifling and frivolous, that
 ' they might have been finished by two Com-
 ' missioners, in a quarter of an hour, every
 ' morning. Most of them were advices,
 ' which they received every minute, of the
 ' effects and money, which, it was pretended,
 ' were concealed by the partisans and people of
 ' the Court. Of a thousand, not ten proved
 ' to be well founded, and this partiality, added
 ' to the obstinacy with which they ad-
 ' hered to forms, in matters which were direct-
 ' ly opposite to them, very soon convinced
 ' me, that *Assemblies, which are formed for re-
 ' pose, can never be fit for motion.*'

THIS, Sir, is the language of a † man no

† [“ This extraordinary man (Cardinal *de Retz*) has
 drawn his own character in his Memoirs, which are writ-
 ten with such an air of grandeur, impetuosity of genius,
 and inequality, as give us a very strong representation
 of his conduct. He was the first Bishop that carried on
 a civil war without the mask of religion. He was a
 man, who, from the greatest degree of debauchery,
 and still languishing under its consequences, had the art
 to harangue the people with success, and make himself
 idolised by them: He breathed nothing but faction and
 sedition. At the age of twenty-three, he had been
 at the head of a conspiracy against the life of *Richelieu*.
 He

less credible on the Parliaments of *France*, than our *Shaftesbury* on the Parliament of *England*. He was the head of the factious, factious himself by inclination rather than by interest. He placed himself at that machine, after having studied it: he put it in order, he set its springs in motion. After he had given it the first impulse, he for a long time regulated its motions. In a word, he was within distance of viewing all the bodies of Magistracy, at that crisis, with the most observant eye. He has given his opinion of them, at a time in which no interest obscured his view, in which no consideration biased his sincerity; when having entirely withdrawn from Court and from business, he neither asked nor expected any thing from men. Setting aside the rights and pretensions of the Parliaments, he has determined the extent of the sphere in which they may legally act. We are in no danger of being mistaken, in valuing those august Assemblies according to the estimation of such an adept.

PERHAPS there are now, in the Parliaments, some *Violes* and *Longueils*, "who blend the

He was the contriver of the barricadoes, he precipitated the Parliament into cabals, and the people into seditions." *Age of Lewis XIV, Chap. 3.*

"The Cardinal, after being removed from prison to prison, died in his retirement in the year 1679." *Mist.]*

"love

“love of faction with the public interest, “and who see the possible and the future, at “the time when the bodies only regard the “present and the apparent.” In this case, one favour from the Court will quiet all the fermentation. One civil or military employment, one prelacy, one place in the Ministry, will silence the leader † of the pack; and the other mutineers will range themselves near him, by instinct, or habit, or through hopes of sharing in the spoil.

PERHAPS also there are, in the present Parliaments, only “the spirit of law-suits, and the “obstinacy which is inseparable from chicanery”. Perhaps too there is no cabal but such as is mentioned by Cardinal *de Retz*, which is “made “without its being known.” It is then a heat which will disperse of itself, provided the Ministers let it expand and evaporate: The claims which the Parliaments at present advance, will sink into an oblivion the more profound, as they will, one day or other, be ashamed of having made them. The submission, in which

† *Longueil's* intrigues procured the Super-intendancy for his brother, the President *de Maisons*. As soon as *Mazarin* ceased to fear *Longueil*, the Super-intendancy was taken from the President. When he was required to resign, he answered, laughing, “The Queen is ill- “advised in removing me. I have done my own business, I was going to do hers.”

Mazarin

Mazarin found them after the war, was in proportion to the resistance with which they had opposed him during the troubles; and I would gladly impute to the fear which those patriotic Assemblies entertained of insensibly wandering a second time into a wrong road, that excessive deference which they paid to the will of *Lewis XIV.* I am persuaded, that the second generation bent because it was already inured to the yoke, but that the first would have been less patient, if it had been less strikingly impressed with the remembrance of the intractableness, which made it transgress the bounds of duty.

If the Court should strongly check the present ferment, that ferment would increase by the repercussion. The Assemblies would fix on the propriety of some of their demands; and the Court must necessarily allow a small number of them, as soon as it unfortunately enters into a particular discussion of them all. For it is very natural, that, among so many choice spirits who love their Prince and their country, there should be a great number who employ themselves on practicable subjects of reformation. You, as well as I, must have observed, in the Remonstrances, some excellent plans for the welfare of the people, for the improvement of the administration in the various departments. I make no doubt, that,
one

one day or other, we shall see many of them adopted by some Ministers who may be complaisant without making the King be suspected of weakness. But I look upon it as certain, that things will remain pretty much on the present footing, together with most of the abuses, as long as the reform is demanded in a tone that would make it be thought, if it was obtained, that it was granted to importunity, or that it was a kind of forced capitulation.

I wish, Sir, that all the people of the universe were free like the *Englisb*. I am even convinced that it is the best state for men in society. But this is not the question in debate between you and me. What we are discussing is, whether the *French* have a right to this freedom, and whether they really aim at procuring it. On both these points I am for the negative.

THERE is no law which has annihilated the General-States. That assembly of the nation by deputies is sunk by disuse; and prescription does not obtain in things of this kind. This long eclipse of the General-States has, without doubt, disordered all the classes of the nation, confounded ranks, debased titles, corrupted the nobility, elated the wealthy, made the yoke of the people more heavy. These are disorders, but they are necessarily introduced into a powerful State which increases

creases in riches and domains. A desire of re-establishing the General-States of *France* in the ancient form, would be a chimerical idea, an enterprize the enacting of which would cause an universal confusion. But nothing is more easy, nothing more advantageous to the King and nation, than the creation of a new national assembly adapted to all those disorders. † For the laws ought to extricate themselves from abuses; and when the latter have attacked the ancient constitution, a great number of them must necessarily be introduced into the new constitution. In all States, and even in those where arbitrary power is legally established, the solidity of the constitution depends on the clear and precise knowledge which the Sovereign and the people have of their respective rights. † The most

† [This seems to be the intention of those Superior Courts lately substituted in the room of the Parliaments.]

† [If the prerogatives, privileges, and jurisdiction of the several branches of our own legislature, or, in particular, that unwritten law which is styled *the Law of Parliament*, had been distinctly settled and ascertained (as surely they might, and it is highly to be wished they were) the miseries which our ancestors suffered from the clashing of prerogative and privilege would have been prevented, nor would their posterity now be apprehensive for the consequences which perhaps may ensue from the opposition of privilege undefined and liberty misunderstood.]

despotic

despotic throne is as firm, on this foundation, as that where the regal authority is the most limited. A King of *Denmark* may enjoy the same security as a King of *Great Britain*. A King of *Poland*, on the contrary, must have as much uneasiness as a *Turkish* Sultan. Whenever you shall urge me to discourse with you on possibilities, I will communicate † to you the ideas of a speculative *Frenchman*, with whom I have had the happiness to contract a friendship. I confess to you, that I can scarce reconcile the real tenderness of the *French* of this reign for the person of their King, with those bitter complaints of his administration, with that collection of proofs so diligently amassed by the Parliaments, to convince him, that it renders the *French* of this generation more unhappy than those of the most miserable generations that have preceded it. I cannot get clear of my embarrassment, but by thinking, that the discontent is artfully fomented, that the pictures are overwrought, that the grievances are exaggerated.

† I have carefully collected the plans and projects sent by Sir *Robert Talbot* to his friends in detached parts of these letters. But I thought that such sportive sallies of imagination being only suited to a certain class of readers, it would be better to put them in a small separate volume.

I AM thoroughly persuaded, that the Parliaments of *France* are the most respectable Courts of Justice in *Europe*; that their members are Magistrates of the greatest integrity, and that most of them are endowed with acquired knowledge suitable to their profession. But, in like manner, I look upon it as certain, that these wise and learned men resemble other men; and that, † out of their sphere, they act like ‡ hood-winked gladiators. *Assemblies formed for repose, Cardinal de Retz excellently says, can never be fit for motion.* This maxim is literally true, and I make no doubt that this prevents the *French* Ministry from being uneasy at the vehement rhetoric of the Sovereign Courts.

AT all times, and on all subjects, the Parliaments have taken and given the warmest alarm, when they have been strongly affected. In all matters which are a little out of the common form, we hear them exclaim, that the whole interest of the Monarch and the Monarchy is at stake, and requires deference to their remonstrances. The Court takes no notice of it; yet things do not go on worse.

† The President *de Thou* says, in his History, that the President *du Montbolon*, made Keeper of the Seals, was a man of admirable uprightness and probity, but that he had no genius or talents but for the bar.

‡ [*Andabates.*]

The creation of some new employments of President and Counsellor was urged, in the two last reigns, as a manifest symptom of the subversion of the State. There would, at present, be the same clamour, if the Court should either suppress the Parliament, or at least reduce the too many members of the Magistracy to a number sufficient for the distribution of justice*. A citizen of *Lyons*, a gentleman of *Forêt*, an ecclesiastic of *Baujeolois*, whose property and abode are a hundred leagues from the Capital, are obliged to go thither to discuss their business in the last resort. You must allow, Sir, that this is a hateful and very grievous burthen to the people of those provinces. Yet the Parliament of *Paris* would breathe fire and flame, and forebode the funeral of Justice, and the ruin of her temple, if some patriot Chancellor should advise the King to establish at *Lyons*, or in some other town of that canton, a Sovereign Court for all those small districts, whose unfortunate inhabitants are obliged to come and be flayed by the Attorneys and other harpies of the Capital. The famous Bull, which is dead with the Jesuits,

* [In this, and in what follows, the author seems to have been a true prophet, and has very ably defended the late proceedings of the King and his Chancellor before they were taken. See Vol. 1. p. 93—5.]

after a reign equally long and victorious, was accused of bringing with it the destruction of religion, morals, and civil society. If the King evokes to his Council a cause which he is pleased to reserve to himself, which he has an incontestable right to do, the Parliament, from which the cause is taken, laments its oppression, and presages that of all the Orders of the Kingdom. The establishment of the bank of *Law*, which overthrew most of the fortunes in *France*, appeared to the Sovereign Courts a scheme of political oeconomy, for which the Court ought not to be responsible but to itself. But those august Assemblies, some years ago, thought the † notes of confession a grievance; and we heard them thunder against those priestly acquittances, and declare, at the foot of the throne, that they carried with them *the abomination of desolation*, that they fixed an insupportable yoke upon a free nation. What, in the main, was the matter in question? To make it appear that the

† [“ It was resolved to demand of dying persons confessional notes, and it was required that these notes should be signed by Priests adhering to the Bull *Unigenitus*, without which no viaticum, no extreme unction, and these two consolations were refused, without pity, to all appellants. The Archbishop of *Paris* engaged deeply in this plan, more from theological zeal than factious inclination.”

Age of Lewis XV, Chap. 36.]

‡ precept

† precept of the Church, which is acknowledged to be obligatory, had been obeyed.

ALL these clamours, Sir, have had their day. That of the present will, in like manner, meet with another clamour which will stifle it. Pray observe that the insolent pride and immense fortune of the Financers are at present the cry of the Parliaments to rally the people, to whom every man rapidly enriched is always odious. Now half, at least, of the grave personages who compose those august Assemblies consists of the sons, grandsons, or heirs of men enriched by Finance. An office of Counsellor of Parliament, or of Master of Accounts, is a kind of surtout which the Financers of one age make their sons put on, in order to disguise and render them respectable to the next generation. For a century past the Magistracy has taken its recruits from this class of the favourites of *Plutus*. Many good sayings are preserved of

† Sir Robert will, no doubt, be accused of not having understood the grounds of this dispute. But perhaps he will appear less ignorant to persons who will honestly go to the source. The Bishop having a right to interdict the office of Confessor to every Priest of his diocese, whose doctrine is suspected by him, and the confessions made to that interdicted Priest being null, what pain must the establishment of notes give to good Catholics?

the first President *de* * *Harlay*, the † *More* of *France*, which give credit to the number of those wild stocks grafted on good wood, in his time. He had, a fortnight before, introduced to the Chambers the son of a Director of the Coaches as a Counsellor, when the son of a Director of the Post obtained the

* [In the reign of *Henry III.* He died in 1616. The term *Harlequin* took its rise from this facetious Lawyer, his house being frequented by a famous *Italian* comedian, or buffoon, whom his companions used to call *Harlequino*, or *little Harlay*.]

† Lord Chancellor of *England*, a man of great merit, naturally a rallier and joker. He died on a scaffold in the reign of *Henry VIII.* When he was urged to have his beard shaved in prison, he replied, 'I am not such a fool as to put myself to expence for my head, before the suit which I am carrying on for it is determined. If I gain it against the King, well and good. If I lose it, my beard belongs to his Majesty.' [The story of his witticism, on the scaffold is well known; to which may be added another, which perhaps gave rise to that above-mentioned by the Editor. After his condemnation, being much importuned by a certain courtier to change his mind, at last he answered, that 'he had changed it.' The courtier immediately went and told the King, and being by him commissioned to know wherein his mind was changed, *More* rebuked him for telling the King every word that he spoke in jest, meaning that 'whereas he had intended to be shaved, that he might appear to the people as before he was wont, he was now fully resolved that his beard should share the same fate as his head.' See *Hoddesden's life of Sir Thomas More*, p. 167.]

King's

King's consent for such another employment. 'Gentlemen,' said the jocular Magistrate, when he introduced the latter, 'this Court, a fortnight ago, received from his Majesty a Coachman. She must now receive from him a Postilion: It behoves her, for the future, to take good care not to drive her business too fast.' One time observing, through the slit of a young Counsellor's gown, a pair of crimson velvet breeches, contrary to the ordinance which enjoined the Magistrates to be dressed all in black, in order to make him ashamed of that ridiculous foppery, 'Sir,' said he, 'it must be owned, that in your family a great regard is paid to colours.' The Chronicle says, that the father of the young Magistrate had been a footman. A large proportion of the other half of these pretended representatives of the French nation has taken from the Finance, as eagerly as the Nobility, some wives with large portions, or else are very desirous of placing their daughters in it without portions. Many younger brothers of the principal families of the Robe are enlisted with the Financiers, fill the Intendancies, and are, at this instant, among the Farmers-General. Judge, Sir, to what all the demonstrations of popularity would tend, if the cause of the Financiers was left, like that of the Jesuits, to

the discretion of the Parliaments. The spirit of the age, which certainly will not be called the spirit of disinterestedness, must have made a strange metamorphosis in the hearts and minds of the *French*, to the advantage of Society, if the Judges should have no regard to affinity, consanguinity, family or personal interest.

THE Ministry pretend not to perceive the anti-monarchical principles which they find in many remonstrances, because they could not appear to see them, without the King's inflicting upon them an exemplary punishment; and considering the ferment which is in men's minds, this punishment would have its dangers. I have had frequent occasions to see a sensible Attorney, who esteems his profession so highly that it does him honour. He is a man cast in the same mould as the celebrated *Fourcroy* in the last reign, who, being questioned by the first President *de Lamoignon* as to the way of life for which he intended his son, bluntly answered him, 'Sir, if my son be a man of genius and honour, I will make him an Attorney; if he be a booby, I will purchase for him the office of Counsellor.' The modern *Fourcroy* told me one day, that 'he undertook to prove, that, if his Majesty should commence an action against a certain Parliament of his Kingdom, on certain articles

'cles of its remonstrances, a tribunal, composed of Commissioners taken from all the Parliaments of *France*, could not dispense with itself from acknowledging and condemning the accused as attainted and convicted of High-treason. Cardinal *de Richelieu*, added he, 'would not have scrupled it, and he would not have wanted the *Lambardemonts* of his time to have it pronounced, that a resolution of the Chambers, infringing the regal prerogative, is of more dangerous consequence to Royalty, and more offensive to the King, than the taking up arms.'

I do not go so far as this severe Attorney; and I should think the Ministry transported by resentment and enslaved by passion, if they took that famous Cardinal for their model. The Parliaments make remonstrances, that is to say, petitions. The two words are synonymous, and the General-States, during their greatest influence, gave their sheets no other title: their language has always been the same as that of the Commons of *England* was before the reign of *Edward IV.* Whatever there may be in the prayer indiscreet, or too pressing, should be imputed to the ardent desire of relief. I would gladly compare the right, which the Sovereign Assemblies have, of making remonstrances to the King, to that in which

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the citizens of *Paris* so much glory, of carrying the shrine of St. *Genevieve* through the city to implore from God rain or fair-weather. The processioners pray and sing most heartily. Every one makes his request according to his interest. They who have marshes, wish for sun-shine. They who have gardens and meadows, ask for rain. They whose grounds are laid out in vineyards, desire good weather for the vintage. Others, whose hopes depend on corn, would have a fine harvest. The object of all these prayers remains in the disposal of a Superior Intelligence, who knows better than these good people what is proper for nature in general, whose welfare he comprehends in all its parts. The Monarch, a representative of the Deity on earth, is not offended with solicitations: he excuses complaints, he pardons impatience and importunity. But he confines himself to what he thinks expedient for the general good, the whole of which he is reckoned to apprehend better than the petitioners. ‘Let them grumble and laugh for their money,’ said *Lewis XII*, the Father of his people, on the subject of a Comedy in which he was made to drink gold, miser-like, in a rich cup.

You insist much, Sir, on the right which the Parliament of *Paris* sounds so loudly, of
registering

registering the edicts of the King of every kind, and on all sorts of subjects. First, let me have the honour to tell you, that when the subject of the edict is common to all the Provinces, the registering of it is made in all the Parliaments, as well as in that of *Paris*: which may serve to undeceive you as to the idea which you seem to have, that, in this respect, the last-named Parliament has some superiority over the rest. When the subject concerns only some Provinces, the registering is confined to their Parliaments. Secondly, we constantly find in history, that the Kings have given their edicts, immediately after their being dispatched, to be registered in the Parliaments in whose jurisdiction they themselves personally were: which proves that the registering is nothing more than a legal notification. The Parliament of *Paris* seems to enjoy, exclusively, the right of this first registering, because the Kings, for a long time past, have resided, and kept their Court, in the countries of its district.

THE *Dutch* are in a very singular error as to this pretended privilege of the Parliament of *Paris*. I know, that, when it was proposed to borrow of them on the funds and revenues of the State which were offered to them as a security, they required that the declaration of the King's Council relative to that

mortgage should be registered in the Parliament of *Paris*. Most men think that this form renders the obligation undeclinable; and that, for want of it, the good pleasure of the King alone makes the contract secure. Mere imagination, Sir. I know from persons thoroughly well informed, that the word † *verification* ought to be understood in its pure and simple signification; and that the whole operation of the Parliament is nothing more than its attestation, which it publishes. If you insist that this gives it a share in the Legislation, I agree with you. But this share will be exactly the same which the Parliament gives to its Serjeants in distributive justice. The King must make it appear to his people that what is intimated to them in his name really flows from him. He sends his edicts, ordinances, and declarations to his Parliament, which acknowledges the sign, the seal, the attestation. The members insert the edict in their registers, and communicate its tenor and authenticity to their subaltern jurisdictions. By this they certify to the people of their district, that what is offered to

† [This is the expression generally used in the original, but as *registering*, which has the same meaning, is more familiar to an *English* reader, it has been substituted in the translation.]

them as the King's pleasure, is really ordained by his Majesty. The above is the exact meaning of verifying [or registering] the edicts of a King of *France*. The Parliaments have no better grounds for refusing the King that verification, than a notary the testimonial of life to a man who comes to prove it before him; than a tip-staff the notification of an arrêt, sent him from the rolls, to a client; than the magistrates of a corporation the certificate of his freedom to a burgher.

THE Parliaments have the power of making remonstrances before or after the registering, when they think they perceive that the edict, which they are commanded to notify, affects the interest of the people, which, in an absolute Monarchy, is always the interest of the Prince. It is the same right which belongs to every member of the Councils of the Sovereign, of giving his opinion and making his objections, according to his honour and conscience, against a resolution which he does not approve. But the Parliament should imitate the prudent circumspection of a Ministerial Counsellor, who will be very careful not to make a disturbance with a fruitless obstinacy, and needlessly to fatigue with his opposition, on a point which he sees sanctified by the majority, and become the will of the King.

King. Before it makes its remonstrances, the Parliament should employ every method possible, with the most profound secrecy, to induce the Ministers to amend the edict, to explain, extend, or confine it, in such a manner, as to spare the Sovereign importunate representations. If this be refused, it may be certain that the clamour of the remonstrances which it prepares will secure it from a second refusal. If it should see room for such a happy impression, its remonstrances are efforts of patriotism. But if it can know, without a doubt, that the Ministry have taken their resolution, and that the King is engaged in such a manner that he cannot retract with honour; then it ought, without hesitation, to keep silence, especially if the edict has not an influence on posterity, which the act of opposition is able to restrain or stop, a single day. The representations, or remonstrances, against oeconomical arrangements adapted to circumstances, are contagious complaints; they fan the discontent of the people, they alienate them from the Sovereign, and making them believe that he oppresses them, renders the burthen that is imposed on them more heavy and more odious. It seems to me, that this remark, so worthy of patriots who are friends to the public tranquillity, has not hitherto affected,

affected, so much as it ought, the remonstrating Assemblies†.

THE ostentatious title of *Parliament of the Peers* will vanish before you in the sense which you, Sir, have given it, if you please to observe that the prerogative was given to the Peers of *France* and not to the Parliament of *Paris*. The residence of the Peers is supposed to follow the Monarch; and they were allowed to have their causes in the jurisdiction of that tribunal only, to which they could with least inconvenience to themselves be transferred. The action which is brought against a Peer of *France* in the Parliament of *Aix*, or of *Bordeaux*, is evoked to that of *Paris*, the supposed place of his residence; in order to spare him the trouble and expence of appearing at those distant tribunals. The Parliament of the Peers will always be that which has the King and his Court in its district. The Peers of *France* are by birth Counsellors of the Parliament of *Paris*. They

† [If this work had not been published in the original five years ago, (the *French* Edition being printed at *Amsterdam* in 1766) it might probably have been supposed, that this letter was lately written, and that the author here alluded to *England* as well as to *France*, to the remonstrances of some of our Corporations, as well as to those of her Parliaments. And many will be inclined to think, that the above remark is equally applicable to both Kingdoms.]

have the same rank in the Parliaments of the Provinces: it is an honour annexed to the Peerage, and not to the Tribunal. The design of the prerogative was to give a testimony to the Nobility, in the person of their Chiefs, of esteem and confidence, and to seem so much to presume on their principles of honour, as to think them able to supply the want of knowledge and learning, for which a great Lord is seldom famous.

I WOULD, by all means, Sir, convert you to my opinion. You must forgive me. Lord B. would laugh at me and my journey, if, without going out of your library, you should be better acquainted, than I am, with the Kingdom of *France*. I am an *Englishman*, but I do not travel in the *English* manner. I have it in my power to discover to you the moving spring of the Parliaments of *France*. This is no trifle, as it is unknown to most of the members of those august Assemblies. Cardinal *de Retz* says, that 'they made a cabal, * in his time, without knowing it;' and I will venture to tell you, that those of the present time are moved, without knowing by whom, or by what. Do not be angry at hearing me again refer you to the fashion. It is a fact, that fashion gives to most of the men of the robe in the Kingdom the turn of mind which they now have. *The Spirit of Laws*

Laws has been, for many years, the fashionable book; and every Magistrate, of those who read, is desirous of appearing to think like the Magistrate who wrote *the Spirit of Laws*. The discovery is that of a speculative Politician of the lowest class, but for whom you, I know, have some value.

‘It is a misfortune,’ says he, ‘for the Court of *France*, that the most esteemed political writer in the Kingdom was not an obscure citizen. M. de Montesquieu was not one of those men of moderate merit, who, having no hopes of any other distinction than the share which may accrue to them from the distinction of the body of which

§ [“In *the Spirit of Laws* there appears much more genius than either in *Puffendorff* or *Grotius*. We cannot read these authors without doing ourselves some kind of violence; but we read *the Spirit of Laws* as much for amusement as instruction. . . . This writer’s lively and ingenious manner of expression, in which we trace the imagination of his countryman *Montaigne*, has, above all, contributed to the great reputation of his work: the same thing, said by a man of equal or even superior learning to him, would not have been read. In short, there is not any work, in which there is more wit, and a greater number of learned ideas and bold things; or where a reader can find more opportunities for instruction, whether he approves or condemns his opinions. . . . M. de Montesquieu was President of the Parliament of *Bourdeaux*, and died in 1755, like a Philosopher, as he had lived.” *Voltaire*.]

‘they

' they are members, devote themselves en-
 ' tirely to its reputation. But he had some
 ' prejudices and interests of profession, by
 ' which he suffered himself to be governed,
 ' without perhaps being sensible of it. Equal-
 ' ly struck, in his journey to *England*, both
 ' with the similitude of the name and with the
 ' real difference between the Assembly which
 ' meets at *Westminster*, and that which sits in
 ' the Palace at *Paris*, he accustomed himself
 ' to think, that a constitution, of old pretty
 ' much the same in the two Kingdoms, is
 ' not become so different in them but by
 ' abuse. Some republican ideas, entirely new
 ' to him, the more easily misled him, as, in
 ' speculation, he considered the whole at one
 ' view, without descending to the practical
 ' particulars of system which result from it,
 ' and he opposed, from conviction, the regal
 ' authority purely monarchical. The consti-
 ' tution of his country rendered the thesis
 ' dangerous. Hence that obscurity in his
 ' manner of discussing it. His situation and
 ' profession made the argument pleasing to
 ' him. Hence that copiousness of wit and
 ' imagination, to offer it in all the lights
 ' that were most capable to mislead. Having
 ' laid it down as one of the principles of the
 ' monarchical constitution, that there must
 ' be a permanent deposit for the laws†, he em-
 ' ployed

† [See the passage here meant in the Appendix, No. 2.]

‘ployed all the subtleties of logic, disguised
‘by the brilliancy of turns and phrases, and
‘thrown into an appearance of order, which
‘is the greatest confusion, to induce the read-
‘ers of *the Spirit of Laws* to think the Par-
‘liaments of *France* those only depositaries.
‘A thousand detached or loose maxims, placed
‘on that base, which may be called waste
‘stones, necessarily oblige us to go up to the
‘first principle, with which we cannot disco-
‘ver their immediate connection. The mind
‘is embarrassed in thus reconciling them; and
‘our prepossession in favour of the author ma-
‘king us yield to his authority, we take for
‘granted what we despair of being able to
‘explain. We ascribe to his great penetra-
‘tion, to the depth of his erudition, our mis-
‘fortune in not understanding him every
‘where alike. *The Spirit of Laws* has given
‘in *France* the same wound to the monarchi-
‘cal constitution, which Cardinal *de Retz* re-
‘proaches the Parliament of *Paris* with giv-
‘ing it in his time. *It has discussed some ques-*
‘*tions venerable by their obscurity*†, &c. The
‘Magistrates are fond of considering M. *de*
‘*Montesquieu* as their teacher; and, like him,
‘*they profane some mysteries* . . . But believe
‘me, Sir, that will cease.’

† [See Vol. I. p. 82.]

I FORETELL the fortune of the teacher, and of his doctrine; and I affirm, that *Montesquieu* will have the same fate as * *Descartes* and † *Gassendi*. His system will make a great noise, and will have a great number of partisans, many of whom will carry it even into fanaticism. Then another system will come, which will make it despised, forgotten. The prerogative, which he gives, of a permanent deposit of the laws of the Monarchy, will one day appear as ridiculous as the will of *Cerisantes*, who, not being worth a penny, made the Duke of *Guise* his executor, for more

* [*“Descartes was the greatest Mathematician of his time, but a Philosopher who knew the least of nature, when compared with those who have succeeded him. . . His natural philosophy is entirely fallen, being founded neither on geometry nor experiments. . . It is only since the year 1730, that France has begun to recover from those chimeras, and since that, experimental philosophy and geometry have been cultivated. . . Descartes died at Stockholm in 1650.”* Voltaire.]

† [*“Gassendi revived part of the philosophy of Epicurus. He was convinced of the necessity of atoms and a vacuum, and what he affirmed, Newton and others have since demonstrated. He had less reputation than Descartes, because he was more reasonable, and formed no hypotheses; but he was accused of atheism, as well as Descartes. Some imagined, that he, who admitted a vacuum, with Epicurus, with him also denied the existence of a God. This is the language of calumniators. . . . He died in 1656.”* Ditto.]

than

than a hundred thousand crowns, which he divided into several legacies.

WHERE are those laws whose deposit should be entrusted to the Parliaments? The learned *Bignon*, and many other lawyers, whose evidence is an authority, attest, that there are no fundamental written laws in being. Has there been in *France* any late compact between the nation and the Sovereign? That is the case with our dear country. But the *French* have nothing like it. The ordinances of their Kings constitute the civil code, deformed by some *Roman* laws. Every King has the same plenitude of authority as his predecessors, with the advantage which the present has over the past. His ordinances have, consequently, more force than theirs, which he can annul, explain, correct, extend, or abridge, as he does his own. Is it not ridiculous to contend for a permanent place of deposit, when there exists nothing to be deposited? The Rolls of the Courts of Justice will be the depositary of the laws of the nation, as they are of the title-deeds of private property; and the Magistrates will divide with the Notaries the care of the deposit. In truth, they can pretend to nothing more.

|| ["This writer has left a name greater than his works. He lived before the time of good literature. The Parliament, to which he was Attorney-General, justly reveres his memory. He died in 1656." *Ditto.*]

‘ THERE

‘THERE is more distance,’ says the President *Henault*, an Historian not suspected by the French Parliamentarians, ‘there is more distance between *Hugh Capet* and us, than between *Clovis* and *Hugh Capet*†.’ He thus expresses himself, after having remarked some of the successive changes in the Government under the Kings of the third race. If the reflection of the Historical Magistrate be just, what value, Sir, will you set on the quotations with which the Sovereign Courts stuff their remonstrances? Will you not tell those gentlemen, that the *Valois* must act differently from the *Capets*, and the *Bourbons* differently from the *Valois*? The former, with the crown on their head, and the sceptre in their hand, were no more than the Chiefs of their potent Nobility. They were, like Emperors, loaded with titles and honours, but very inconsiderable in power and authority. It may be said of them, as *M. de Voltaire* has said of the Popes, that, ‘their fierce vassals, when they kissed their feet, tied their hands.’ The Parliament of their time, if there was one, was a Congress, or Diet, in which were

† [*Clovis*, the first King of France, died in the year 511. *Hugh Capet*, the founder of the third race of Kings, (now reigning) died in 997. So that from *Clovis* to *Capet* is 486 years, and from *Capet* to the present year (1771) is 774 years.]

transacted the affairs of the Crown, for which the King would in vain have formed the greatest projects, if the Peers and Barons of the realm had not concurred with him in the execution of them. The *Valois*, a little more at large by the effect of the Crusades, which had enlightened and impoverished the Nobility, struggled with their vassals with a boldness better founded, and more successful, than that of *Lewis VI*, surnamed *the Fat*. They pretended to be Chief Justices in all *France*; and having made themselves acknowledged in that capacity, they gained the esteem of the people by sending some Commissioners, (*Missi domini*) who received, in their name, the appeal of the subjects of the vassals.

THEY then established some Parliaments, in the present sense, that is, some Royal Tribunals of distributive Sovereign Justice. At first, the Tribunal followed the Court. When they saw it universally respected, they assigned it its residence. That of *Toulouse* was created a year after that of *Paris*†; and as the jurisdiction of the latter was of a much larger extent, the Monarch studied to compose it of men able to obtain, by their

† [The Parliament of *Paris* was established, or rather fixed to that City, in 1302, and that of *Toulouse* in 1303, both by *Philip the Fair*.]

rank, that respect, which the great vassals might be tempted to refuse to their commission. All the Bishops sat in that Parliament, of which the Presidents were some Princes of the Blood Royal, and the Counsellors some Lords of the highest rank. The institution acquiring solidity, the Kings had thoughts of availing themselves of it to lower the Nobility and Clergy. They made piety a pretext, to banish the Bishops from that assembly. Afterwards, they laid great stress on the necessity of being good scholars in order to be good judges. The great Lords withdrew themselves, that they might not be confounded with learned plebeians. By insensible degrees, the King was the absolute master of the Parliament, and the Parliament was the servant of the King. The *Bourbons* have made use of it to support the eclipse of the States. But they have taken great care to tell the Nation, that they thought she would acknowledge it for the substitute of that national assembly. As the human mind revolves in a circle, which it must begin to describe anew when it has described it; we may imagine that the Kings of *France* will, one day or other, again raise up the States against the Parliaments, and the Nobility, with the Clergy, against the States. The Parliaments of *France* will essentially adhere

to Royalty, as long as the King shall see no more than his authority in theirs. As soon as the division of one sole Parliament of *France* into classes sitting at *Rouen, Rennes, Bourdeaux, Toulouse, &c.* shall have placed a State within a State, and formed a body, which will leave no medium between being contented or annihilated; the Monarch, the moment they enter on their guardianship, will have the most urgent reasons to reduce the Parliaments, even in name, again to nothing.

THE Kings of *France*, at their Coronation, which is the solemn act of their taking possession of the throne, swear to protect the Church, and to do justice to their subjects. This is the whole form of the oath, the model of which was left them by the Kings their ancestors. They impose on themselves, by a particular oath, the prohibition of pardoning three crimes, whose impunity they have justly thought destructive to Society; these are duelling, rape, and wilful murder. The Representatives of the ancient Peers, the great Officers of the Crown, the Lords, and the Prelates, attending, unite with the body of the people, and answer with acclamations. No national Chart is produced; no mention is made of the rights of the General States,
or.

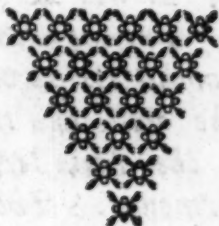
or of those of the great Assemblies, or of the prerogatives of the Grandees, or of the privileges of the Commons. Religion and justice are recommended to the Monarch, to whom his own interest recommends the State and his subjects.

You will ask me, whether I think this plan the best of all possible plans. Without being a Doctor *Pangloss*†, I will answer you, that I think it such for *France*, and I am almost sure that you will think so too, when you have examined, with attention and impartiality, the genius and character of the *French*, lively to a degree of rashness, active to a degree of confusion, possessing the finest spot of ground in *Europe*, surrounded by warlike and numerous nations, who are envious of the goodness of their soil, and are always ready to over-run it. Such a State will have a Monarch, and would soon disappear from the face of the earth, if the passions of Republicans should infect her principal heads. As it is ridiculous to descend on contingences morally impossible, I here conclude this long epistle, whose length, I confess to you, is owing to my vanity. I am so proud of contending

† [See *Voltaire's Candide*.]

with you, Sir, and that on your own invitation, that, if the same vanity did not make me apprehensive of becoming tedious, I should still scribble some sheets, before I should tell you, that,

I am, &c.



LET

L E T T E R XXII.

TO THE EARL OF B.

What the Marine of France was in 1738. What it might have been in 1744. Offer of the inhabitants of St. Malo. Particulars concerning the successors of M. Machaut d'Arnouville. Lamentable state of that department when the Duke de Choiseul was placed at the head of it. Remarkable story of an officer's little emulation. Reflections on the rigour of Lewis XIV's Ordinances for the Marine. Present enthusiasm of the nation to re-establish its naval force. Obstacles which the will of the King, and the assiduity of the Ministers, cannot, for a long time, surmount. The French are tired of this war, without being humbled by it. They think differently from the English as to American possessions. They have no idea of conquests. Curious extract from a work little known, on the indifference which might be felt in France, as to losses in America and Asia. Plan of a Martinique for the establishment of a permanent Marine in the Colonies. How much England ought to wish that it may not be approved by the Court.

My

MY LORD,

THE lamentable state of the *French* Marine has by no means been exaggerated to you. Trade flourished in 1738. Perhaps it would still have supported itself, notwithstanding the weakness of the naval force, if Cardinal *de Fleury*, less timid, had availed himself of our war with *Spain*, by employing the privateers of *Bayonne*, *St. Malo*, and *Dieppe*. At the time of the declaration of war, in 1744, the *Malouins* requiring an assurance of four years hostilities, offered to put to sea fifty privateers in the first, and double that number in the following years. But the Court refused that singular guaranty. Perhaps she thought that the *Bretons* were too confident of their strength. Perhaps also she flattered herself with a speedy peace by her new plan of operations. The latter idea was, probably, that of the *Malouins*, and stopped the flight which otherwise they would have taken. We, my Lord, should have suffered from it not a little. That City still abounded with the spirit of the brave † *Dugue-Trouin*. She had a great

† [“From Commander of a privateer, this officer became Lieutenant-General of the naval forces. He was

number of inhabitants who had served under that able and valiant sea-officer. It was a kind of hive, which would have poured out upon our merchants some swarms of very troublesome hornets. Till M. *Machaut d'Arnouville*, the successors of Count de *Maurepas* were either without capacity, or wanted credit, to restore their department. Those, who, for our advantage, have succeeded M. *de Machaut*, have strove, one would think, with emulation, to complete its ruin. One of them was so good a contriver, that, when the fleet was disarming, he ordered the rigging to be sold on the King's account, that the cash of the State might not be burthened with the pay of the sailors whom he disbanded. Another came to the head of that department, with so little knowledge of all that related to it, that he thought himself ridiculed by an officer, who was recommended to him as a naval engineer. He recollected the comic character, who entitled himself, 'Colonel of a regiment of cavalry on board

a man of singular genius, and wanted only the command of fleets to gain him the reputation of a *Dragut* or a *Barbarossa*. In 1711, having then no rank in the navy, and owing every thing to himself, he equipped a fleet, and took *St. Sebastian de Rio Janeiro*, one of the principal towns in *Brazil*. He has left us some memoirs written in the style of a soldier, which are proper to excite emulation in his countrymen." *Voltaire.*]

“ the

“the galleys of *Malta*.” I have seen a copper medal, struck in memory of him by a set of sarcastical jokers. There was only the year of our Lord on the face. On the reverse was a ship, which rowed with sails expanded, and for the legend were two *Latin* words, well known for that device. It is not surprising, that, under such Ministers, in other respects the most amiable men in the world, the annihilation of the Marine should be completed. When the Duke *de Choiseul* undertook the management of it, there was neither canvass, nor flax, nor hemp left in the King’s magazines, no timber fit for building in the yards, a very small quantity of arms and ordnance in the arsenals; and the little that was there could not be matched. The stores and provisions were like the rigging, that is, there were none. The old seamen were discouraged, the young were without emulation or experience. I was in company with one of the latter, when he related, without seeming ashamed of it, that a frigate of thirty guns, which he commanded, and with which he was convoying a large ship in the *American* seas, was taken by one of our sloops of war. On my expressing my amazement at it, he replied, without being disconcerted, that “his frigate

“ was so loaded with merchandises, that it
“ was impossible for him to work his
“ guns.” “ Ah! Sir,” said I, “ were you
“ not tempted, on seeing the enemy’s co-
“ lours, to clear your deck?” “ No, in
“ truth,” he ingenuously answered. “ My
“ lading was on account of persons who
“ would have ruined me, if I had lost
“ it; instead of which, by shewing them
“ how much I had exposed myself, in every
“ respect, in order to preserve it, they al-
“ lowed that they were obliged to me, and
“ that the Ministry ought to recompense
“ me for them. So I was advanced one
“ step.” *O tempora! O mores!* I have been
assured, that the regulation of the Marine
under *Lewis XIV* required, that the Com-
mander of a King’s ship should have on
board nothing but arms and ammuni-
tion, and not give up his ship but with
life. I think the Ordinance too severe; and
I impute to its extreme severity its not
being executed. It is the fate of regula-
tions of this kind, which do not hold but
during the first fire of enthusiasm. We
find in those of the land-service, that a
Governor of a fortified place is bound, at
the hazard of his honour and life, not to
capitulate till the third assault on the body
of the fortress. There have been many
sieges

sieges in this century; but not one, in which the regulation was obeyed. It is proper to reconcile prudence and humanity with bravery. Otherwise, the latter is nothing but fierceness. *Lewis XIV*, if he had acted according to his regulation, ought to have composed the garrisons of madmen or desperadoes.

THE attention of the nation is all at once fixed on the Marine; and the new Minister has turned this first heat to his advantage. A town in *Champagne*, whose inhabitants have not the slightest idea of the sea, has offered its voluntary contribution for the building of ships. The Province of *Alsace* sends its hemp to the sea-ports; and that of *Bearn* fells timber in the *Pyrenées*. The enthusiasm is general; and it is so strong, that the Ministry would be detested, if they should only betray a glimpse, that, for reasons of prudence, as you call it, they would wish to damp it. Yet I will venture to exhort your Lordship to be in no apprehension for the future. The Duke *de Choiseul* has so many prejudices to destroy, in order to give the *French* Marine a solid stability, that the most determined will of the King can never overcome them. I shall content myself with quoting, 1. The preference which the Nobility

G 4

lity expect in a department where all their advantages are of no service. 2. The hereditary tenure of the post of High-Admiral, which, instead of a Chief, gives a kind of Dignitary to a department, where esteem and confidence are only obtained by a taste and talents for the profession. 3. The reluctance of the *French* to go and learn from foreigners, and that of foreigners to receive them as learners. 4. The old custom of raising land forces in the maritime provinces. 5. The indifference of the Court as to privateers, and its practice of ennobling, and consequently removing out of their rank, the traders and merchants who are grown wealthy. 6. The habit of curbing the Colonies in the culture of their plantations, and in the traffic of their produce. 7. The low wages of the sailors, the custom of forming numerous crews, by mixing some land soldiers with the seamen, the little care which the Government † takes of the widows and orphans, its blindness as to the importance of the cabin-boys, the

† The Duke de Choiseul has already entered on this *Item*. On most of the others, Sir Robert gives, at a venture, his affirmative; and to the great satisfaction of good *Frenchmen*, there is not one of those *Items*, which, supposing them really to exist, might not cease to exist by the will of the King and the care of the Ministers.

state of nature of the foundlings, whose hospitals might be made a seminary of excellent mariners. Lastly, The authority of writers as to armaments, the orders of the Cabinet as to operations, the Court spirit and views in the officers, steady to the plan which they receive from the Office, as if the Office could command the winds and sea. Add the universality of the rules of subordination, which justifies to the seconds in command the misconduct of their chiefs. The above is certainly more than the longest life of a Cardinal *de Richelieu* could correct. If to this you join the indifference as to cruising, the shackles that are put upon the fisheries, the mistaken privileges of the *India Company*, the division between the departments of the Ocean and the *Mediterranean*, the ruinous inattention of maintaining galleys, you will despise the enemies of peace, who pretend to be apprehensive that the *French* desire it only that they may take breath, and return to the combat better prepared.

My Lord-Duke has, without doubt, informed your Lordship, that both the Court and the people are equally far from that humiliation, in which they must necessarily

be to receive, like the *Carthaginians*†, some conditions and limitations as to the number and strength of their naval force. The *French* do not annex the same value, that we do, to settlements in *America*. There are some men of sense who venture to maintain in the King's Council, that, excepting those which produce sugar, and which may produce tobacco, both become part of the necessaries of the Kingdom, it would be an advantage to the King and the nation to abandon them. The bulk of the nation goes much farther. Confounding the first inhabitants of the Colonies with those who afterwards voluntarily went and settled there, they consider the *French* beyond the seas as a scum from which the Kingdom is cleansed, and despise them. They recollect, that, in the time of *Henry II*, when *France* had neither *Flanders*, nor *Hainault*, nor *Artois*, nor *Lorraine*, nor *Alsace*, nor *Roussillon*, nor *Franche-Comté*‡, she reckoned nineteen mil-

‡ [One of the terms of the peace granted by *Scipio* to the *Carthaginians*, after the battle of *Zama*, was that they should deliver up all their ships of war, except ten *triremes*.]

† [The Provinces of *Artois*, *Alsace*, and *Roussillon* were ceded to *Lewis XIV* by the treaty of the *Pyrenées*, 1659, *Flanders* by that of *Aix-la-Chapelle*, 1668, *Hainault* and *Franche*

lions of inhabitants, while at present they do not amount to seventeen; and this depopulation they ascribe to *America*. They would have the King recall all his subjects from *Canada* and *Louisiana*, and distribute them in several provinces of the Kingdom which want husbandmen. All desire a powerful Marine, in order to restore commerce, and carry it to its utmost height; no one is heard to hope, or even to wish, for conquests. It is not my business to examine whether our enemies are just in their arguments, sensible and conclusive in their wishes.

A * PAMPHLET lately published, and of which there are only two copies in all *Paris*, seems to me worthy of your Lordship's notice, and I therefore send it. It is by a writer, who, you allow, deserves some esteem. He seems to have made it his business, either to cure us of the disease of conquests, or to console the *French* for the mortification of ceding to us those which we have made. It is the strain of an *English-*

Franche-Comté by that of *Nimeguen*, 1678, and *Lorraine* was yielded to *Lewis XV* in 1734.]

* Entitled, *La Paix Generale. Considerations du Docteur Man'lover, d'Oxford. A Stuttgart, Juillet 1762.* [See Vol. I. p. 47.

man,

man, who gives scope to his imagination on the articles of the approaching Treaty. I will venture to quote the part which strikes me most, and which may determine your Lordship to bestow on the whole pamphlet some hours of your time.

“ I CONSENT, “ *says the pretended Englishman,*” that *France* should cede us in *America* all that she possesses there, and which has made us uneasy for our settlements. I would also have *Spain* compelled to allow us to go to it which way we please, and to receive us for her only neighbours on that vast continent. I allow *Holland* and *Denmark* to be silent. What shall we have gained, if *France*, pretending to have no more pretensions to rivalry, should refuse to enter into a particular Treaty of Commerce with us, and should annul all the former? We have much blamed *Lewis XIV*; but we have not attended to the greatest fault which he committed during his long reign, to that which is the principal cause of the wealth and grandeur of *Britain*.

“ THAT Monarch, at the end of every one of his wars, quibbled, in the Treaty of Peace, for a town or a village of *Flanders* or of *Alsace*; and was lavish in the Treaties of Commerce which followed the general Treaty. This victorious King seemed to disclaim

disdain descending to concerns which might seem to be less the concerns of the Prince than those of a portion of the Third-Estate of his Kingdom. What his ambition hoped from *John de Witt*, Grand Pensioner of *Holland*, for the acquisition of the *Austrian Netherlands*, induced him, from 1662 to 1668, to grant privileges to the *Dutch*, in preference to his own subjects, for commerce and navigation in the ports of *France*. The subsequent Treaties between *France* and the Republic have always had those concessions for their basis. The hopes which his ambition gave him from our *Charles II*, made him indifferent, nay indulgent, as to the regulations which have carried our commerce and navigation to the height at which they both are at present. We partook of those first concessions at the Peace of *Nimeguen*, in the Treaties of *Ryswick* and *Utrecht*; and we have constantly pursued our point in the succeeding Treaties.

“ LESS prejudiced by the ambition of enlarging his frontiers, *Lewis XIV* would have applauded our famous † *Act of commerce and na-*

† [This Act, which was passed by the Parliament in 1651, prohibited the importing from *Asia*, *Africa*, or *America* any goods but in *English ships*, or from any part of *Europe*, except the goods were the growth or manufactory of the country from whence they were imported: It also prohibited the importing any salt-fish, whale-

vigation. But he would have caused one pretty much like it to be registered in the Parliaments of his Kingdom. Thus, like the *English* for the ports of *England*, the *French* would have had an exclusive privilege for the ports of *France*. They alone would have had the right of exporting their own commodities and manufactures, and of importing those of foreign countries. Nothing more was wanting to maintain for ever the Marine of *France* on an equality with that of *England* and *Holland* united. Circumstances have not altered to our advantage; and I take it for granted, that this single Act passed in *France* would be sufficient to restore her mercantile Marine, which is absolutely ruined. On the above let us make some reflections.

“ WHEN the King of *France* has given up to us *Canada*, *Louisiana*, the coast of *Africa*, and even the little *Antilles*, when he has also reduced *Dunkirk* to a small and bad mercantile haven; what shall we have to demand of him? No doubt, we shall make application for a Treaty of Commerce, confirming andre-

whale-fin, or oil, but those caught or made by the people of *England*. See *Macaulay's Hist. of England*, Vol. v. p. 85.

This Act was confirmed and completed in 1660, and entitled, “ An Act for the encouragement and increasing of shipping and navigation.” See *Statutes at large*, 12 Char. II. Chap. 17.]

newing

newing the former. The Court of *Versailles* will answer, that ‘the commerce and navigation of *France* being entirely changed by the ‘cessions which she has made us, the former ‘Treaties relative to them both can no longer be ‘admitted, or even quoted.’ What shall we have to reply? We shall confine ourselves to the demanding, purely and simply, a new Treaty of commerce. Shall we have room to complain, if it be offered us in one single article, importing, that ‘the *English* merchants and navigators shall be treated in the seas, roads, and ‘ports of *France* like the most favoured foreign merchants and navigators?’ Peace will be proclaimed in the dominions of both Monarchies; and eight days after, his Most Christian Majesty’s Council will issue an Ordinance †, importing,

“ THAT, in imitation of the wisest and happiest people in *Europe*, a people whose esteem and friendship will be always dear to the French, &c. His Majesty has judged that it would be for the good of the State, and the advantage of his subjects, to enact, that, for the future, no foreign vessel shall be admitted into the ports of the Kingdom,

† The judicious Ordinance, relating to the exportation of corn, proves, that this idea has been already adopted by the Court.

with.

“ with any other cargo than the commodities
“ of the growth of the country to which the
“ vessel belongs: His said Majesty willing
“ and ordaining, that his subjects alone shall
“ bring and unload, in his islands, roads, and
“ ports, the merchandises of both the *Indies*,
“ foreign manufactures, salt-fish, cheeses,
“ and other commodities made in any but his
“ own dominions; his said Majesty, finally,
“ promising and granting all sorts of favours,
“ and special protection to such foreigners,
“ particularly to the subjects of the King of
“ *Great Britain*, as shall bring into the ports
“ of *France* goods of the growth of their
“ country, saving the duties imposed, or to be
“ imposed upon them, &c.”

“ HAVE we any business to pry into the
rules of interior administration which the King
of *France* shall please to establish? The *French*
merchants and navigators submitting themselves
to all the Acts which our King and Parliament
make concerning the commerce and naviga-
tion of *Great Britain*, why should we spurn
at the Ordinances which the King of *France*
is pleased to make for the advantage of the
commerce and navigation of his subjects?
Shall we recur to a remedy worse than the dis-
ease, by pretending that all the countries and
subjects belonging to *Great Britain* are cir-
cumstanced alike, and by reckoning as commo-
dities

dities of our growth all the produce of our Colonies in *Asia* and *America*? First, we shall not be allowed that pretension; as our own Act prohibits it to other nations. Secondly, we would not grant that coalition to *Ireland* and the *Irish*. With much more reason, we shall refuse it to the distant Colonies, the possession of which will not be lucrative to us any farther than as we keep them in dependence on the metropolis. There is no medium: we must either submit to the Ordinance, or we must make war on the King of *France*, to prevent his being master at home. I do not think that the greatest enthusiasts among us carry the law of war so far. It therefore remains for us so to conduct ourselves towards his Most Christian Majesty, as to deserve his continuing us on the old footing in our commerce with his subjects”

I AM well persuaded, my Lord, that the present Ministry of *France* will not adopt the whole idea of this writer, all at once. They are now engaged with many other objects which seem to demand the preference; and, besides, to complete a revolution in commercial connections with foreigners requires some long preambles. But it is very probable that they may take a distant view of it; that they may let the nation fix her eyes upon it; and that, with a seeming indifference, they turn the hopes
and

and confidence of the people on that side. We are mistaken, if we imagine that the excess of our superiority discourages the *French*, and deprives them of the desire of shaking off dependence. At the very moment when they are fully convinced of the former, they scheme against it.

A MARINE plan for the *American* seas, which was transmitted to the Office by a very zealous and sensible *Martiniquese*, was communicated to me some days ago. This man has been in *Europe* several years: if he had commanded in the island, when we attacked it, I question whether we should have conquered it. He proposes, that the King should give up all his duties of harbour and anchorage, the customs, exports, and poll-tax, in the islands of *St. Domingo*, *Martinico*, *Guadeloupe*, and others, as well as in *Guiana*, for the support of ten ships of the line, and as many frigates, which should be stationed in the harbours and roads of those Colonies, at their return from their cruises, for the safety and facility of commerce. Some ship-builders and artificers should be distributed in every Colony, to fell and work the timber which each of them can or ought to furnish from itself or elsewhere, and to build every year the ship, or ships, that may be imposed upon it. The iron and rigging should be supplied by *France*, at the expence of the Colonies.

Colonies. The ordnance should be taken from some ships laid up, which might return to *Europe* as merchantmen, in time of peace. Every year, a fund should be kept in reserve in the two great Colonies, to provide the arsenals with great and small arms, as well as stores and ammunition. Every three years, this squadron, carefully repaired and recruited, should be relieved by a squadron which it should go and replace in the ports of *France*. Such of its sailors as might chuse to settle in the island of *St. Domingo*, and in *Guiana*, which are capable of receiving some millions of husbandmen, should have their dismissal, after their three years service, with a gratuity, at the expence of the Colonies, and a piece of ground fit for a dwelling. Every one should be allowed to intermarry with the daughters of the Colonists, even during the time of their service; in order to attach them the more to their future country: No mariner should have any command on board merchantmen, till after he had served one year, at least, in the *American* department.

THE Author of this plan demonstrates, that the Colonies would be less aggrieved by this establishment, than they are by the much less contributions which they pay to the King. His accounts are exact, and his arguments unanswerable. He shews the advantage which
would

would accrue to his Most Christian Majesty, even in regard to his influence in *Europe*, from having always ready for all events, and without drawing any thing from his coffers, a powerful fleet in the seas where our ships are generally before-hand with his, and are almost certain of intercepting the reinforcements and supplies, which wait till the moment they are wanted before they depart from the ports of *France*. This fleet might be reckoned at twenty ships of the line, and as many frigates, since half that number would always be ready to relieve the other.

I wish, my Lord, that this plan, which is not without difficulties, may display its weak side to persons who are able to make the best of the objections †. What would be-

† [The great annoyance which an enemy would receive from this plan, if executed, in time of war, and its great local advantage to the Colonies, at all times, by the considerable sums constantly expended and the numbers of useful hands employed among them, seem undeniable. But for this very reason, it is scarce probable that any Minister, who knows the true interest of his country, will be persuaded to adopt it; or if he should, as, besides artificers, &c. 6500 seamen at least, (reckoning, at an average, 500 to every ship of the line, and 150 to every frigate) would be always employed on board the squadron stationed in the Colonies, and many, perhaps most of these, at the end of every three years, so encouraged, would be induced to settle there for life, and leave their places to be supplied by fresh recruits from *Europe*, the constant migration of so many useful hands,

come of us, if we were obliged to be perpetually on the defensive against so great a force, in those distant seas, and in a part of *America* where we have few harbours, where subsistence is more difficult, where, in a word, we are most weak? Is our *Jamaica* as valuable as *St. Domingo*? Is not *Martinico* alone worth all our little *Antilles*? *Guiana* is a vast portion of the Continent, which ten years labour and population may render equal to *Brasil*, which it greatly resembles as to soil.

I am, &c.

hands, and the consequent neglect of agriculture and manufactures at home, would soon render *France* as weak and uncultivated as the expulsion of the *Moors* and the discovery of *America* have rendered *Spain*, and would too late convince her, that this projector, though a good *Martinique*, is a bad *Frenchman*, as no Colonies can be thus aggrandised but at the expence and ruin of the mother-country.]

LET-

LETTER XXIII.

TO SIR CHARLES G.

That we should be very careful not to form an idea of the French nation from that handful of Frenchmen who style themselves persons of taste and fashion, the modish world, &c. That the French education, as to essentials, is not uniform like the English. French of two kinds, the frivolous and the solid. That the English often adhere to the former, and why. The French know how to varnish their vices. The English are ignorant of that art. Yet the vices of the latter are less prejudicial to the State. Mazarin's and Lewis XIV's reasons for giving the minds of the Nobility a turn to frivolousness. Those reasons subsist no longer. Hypothesis to give an idea of the ravage which a few people of taste may make. How Sir Robert knows them in this journey. His connection with Frenchmen of a different kind. Portrait of those amiable and respectable men. What an Englishman gains by knowing them.

SIR,

I WENT farther than I intended in my last letter, since you have understood of the whole

whole *French* nation what I only pretended to tell you of a detached part, which is not considerable but by its volubility; and which will cease to exist as soon as the Minister, the depositary of the grand Police, shall order it to re-unite, on pain of being despised. I have expressed myself so ill, that you have fallen into the error of a man, who should judge of the bulk of an army by its scouts and stragglers. It is not in *France* as it is in *England*, where the education for persons of the same rank being the same, the national spirit displays itself with uniformity, and is seen at the first glance. The *French* above the middle rank have not that confidence in their Colleges which we have in ours. They reckon what they learn there as less than nothing: they exhort their children to seem not to remember it, when they bring them out into the world. Some think that a gentleman may, without learning any thing, know all that is fit for him to know. Others imagine that genius is like the earth, which, however good it may be, has always need of cultivation. From the hands of tutors the former have passed into those of a dancing-master. After the society of their College companions, they have had that of the Theatrical gentry of both sexes, and of those women of quality who are so courageous as to despise reputation, or so heroic

roical as to desire a great one, without caring whether it be good or bad. With this portion of the *French* Nobility it was my intention, my dear Sir *Charles*, to entertain you. These are the *French* with whom our young travellers are acquainted, and whom they take for their models at their return to *England*.

I HAVE observed, Sir, that such of our young people as are most desirous to be, one day or other, worth something, are those who receive most readily the contagion of fashionable vices and follies. Our education supplying us with no charms for society, we have no sooner lost sight of *England*, than we perceive that every thing of that kind is wanting to us. We eagerly study to acquire it; and this eagerness leads us into a mistake. The most just disposition is the least aware of it, because it apprehends most strongly the necessity of acquisitions. One of a dull or stubborn temper traverses foreign countries without observing their inhabitants. He obstinately adheres to the customs, tastes, manners of his own country; he lives at *Paris* and *Rome*, as he does at *London*, and returns to *England* such as he left it. The former, in the midst of the capital of *France*, is a child who finds himself for the first time on the sea shore, and to whom the meanest shells are curiosities to be placed in his collection. The heart of a young man
gladly

gladly unfolds itself to friendship : he is deluded by the flattering and endearing manners of the modish *French*, of those who style themselves * persons of taste and fashion, persons whom their idleness makes industrious to procure themselves a new connection, and who, in order to form it, have an infinite forwardness, and, to support it, an inexhaustible complaisance. But with these gentlemen there is no reflection on the duties of situation or profession. They are polite by habit, flattering by their desire of company : they do every thing by rote or caprice ; they have in nothing the merit of sentiment. They have, as one may say, only the trimming of the national genius, only the outside appearance of that amiable character, in whose favour the very enemies of the *French* nation overlook her faults. I am fond of the idea of comparing the *French* nation to a picture, of which fashionable people are the frame, curiously adorned with every thing rich and brilliant that levity can afford. The whole is pleasing, because a thick and shining varnish conceals its defects. The reigning passion of the *French* is that of society. They study, when they are vicious, to render their vices sociable, by a politeness which extenuates some,

* [*Gens du bel air et du bon ton.*]

which embellishes and decorates others, and disguises many of them under a gay and sportful virtue. A dissipated *Frenchman* appears only brisk and lively, the libertine is only a man of gallantry, the debauchee seems only to be a libertine, the cheat is not branded with imposture and falsehood; he is a man of delightful connections, he has the true knowledge of the world, he is formed for shining in good company. The glutton pretends only to be a friend to good cheer, and the drunkard to merriment. The idler, useless to his country, is deemed a philosopher; and so of the rest. With us, on the contrary, the man of dissipation is a man without brains, the libertine a debauchee, and the man of good cheer gives himself up to drunkenness, &c.

Do not imagine, my dear Sir *Charles*, that this difference in the prospect makes me conclude to the advantage of the *French*. I aim at the public good; I view the country in the relations which every individual forms in society; and, without entirely admitting the system of our Dr. *Mandeville*, in his *Fable of the Bees*, I am convinced that private vices, prevailing in a nation, conduce to its welfare, as well as contribute to its ruin. Our vicious men are so to an extreme. It is fierceness, brutality, if you please. But their courage is very far from softening them; and their country

country finds them, in time of need, as soldiers, intrepid both by land and sea, as partisans of liberty, incorruptible, as citizens, always ready to sacrifice for her their lives and fortunes. The vices at present reigning among the *French Nobility* draw after them a frivolous effeminacy, and directly tend to an indifference for the public welfare; which threatens *France* with approaching ruin, unless the Ministers engage the Sovereign† to make a point of a reformation, which will stop the contagion.

CARDINAL *Mazarin* endeavoured to employ the Princes and Peers in every thing but the affairs of Government; and he did right. He had no readier and surer means of extinguishing the spirit of mutiny and cabal, which continually set the regal authority at variance with the caprices or little resentments of the Great. If *France*, like the Papal State, had been

† [*Regis ad exemplum totus componitur orbis*, is an old observation, and is always quoted and applied with too much reason, when the Monarch sets a bad example, when a *Charles II* and a *Lewis XV* are pre-eminent in vice as well as in station. But at present, the undisguised licentiousness of our higher ranks, in faith and practice directly the reverse of those, who, though they govern, cannot guide them, seems to prove, that royal examples, when good, have little influence, and, when bad, are only a pretence eagerly adopted by those who were previously accustomed to do evil.]

free from rivalry and from war, *Lewis XIV* would have acted like an able politician, by adopting, during all his long reign, the system of his Minister. A State which may depend on a perpetual peace, has need only of a very small number of men of superior genius and talents. It requires of its chief men obedience only and love of quiet. Both infallibly spring from a taste for pleasures; and the Sovereign has neither cabals nor conspiracies to fear from persons devoted to amusement. But if, to have a happy reign, it is not sufficient for a King of *France* to have amiable Courtiers, an elegant and polite Nobility, respectful and submissive subjects, you must allow that it is time for the Court of *Versailles*, which, for a century past, has been profuse in its expences for the embellishment of the throne, to give her chief attention to its support, and to do every thing in her power to recover, with the amiable qualities, of which the nation has a superabundance, those austere virtues which are the natural principle of the prosperity, and even of the existence, of powerful States. I compute at three or four thousand, at most, the chief heads which fashion has spoiled. These seem as nothing in a Kingdom which contains sixteen or seventeen millions of all ranks. But these three or four thousand take, or would take

take the lead ; they set themselves up to public view, and would be deemed models. I agree with you, that they are only puppets. But they hang upon the wire, that makes them move, an infinite number of figures, which they oblige to move like themselves, and with themselves. Distribute two thousand of these leaders in the army, admit five hundred of them into the robe, three hundred into the church, and the rest among the principal persons of the third-estate ; then imagine a general commotion in a dangerous crisis. Allowing that the number of sages will be infinitely superior ; will you pretend, that the multitude will be for them ? No, without doubt ; they have neither the sprightliness nor the brilliancy of the rest ; and the people more readily follow joyous fools than men of gravity.

DURING half my first residence at *Paris*, I was acquainted only with *Frenchmen* of the former kind. Having left *Dover*, without having the least notion of the pleasure of living a little for others, I adored men who gave themselves up entirely to that pleasure. With what satisfaction should I have seen myself transported all at once into the midst of those who did not abandon themselves to it but with discernment and discretion ! For that I should have had need of a good guide ;

and the leader who was given me was scarce able to lead a bear. I began my travels again without any other assistance than the inspection of the map. I lost my way, that was natural; and yet that, for a long time, humbled me. For it was long before I conceived why the levity of my first acquaintances did not disgust me; how I could be deluded by the flattering vanity of those gentlemen, so as almost to admire the ridiculous fertility of their genius on nothing, and to be vexed at finding myself so far from attaining it. My good fortune at length brought me into real good company; and I was acquainted with true *Frenchmen*. Now, when I have no connection with the others, I scarce know, but by my eyes, that they still exist; and it is only from report that I tell you they are multiplied, so as to become dangerous to the State.

AN *Englishman*, who should have the happiness to be at first in a regular intercourse with the former, and who should judge of the nation from them, as we generally judge of it from the latter, would require all his love for his country to return to his countrymen. Conceive to yourself, my dear friend, men whose minds, cultivated with care on leaving College, where nothing is regarded but amusement, are unfolded with courage, enlarged

larged with rapidity, always supported by an imagination the more brilliant, as it has not been fatigued, like ours, by premature efforts. Every thing is placed with facility, is ranged with order and elegance, in a head which pedantry has not yet attacked. Its knowledge is without tautology, because its ideas are clear. The genius displays itself with ease and grace, because the memory is not overloaded. The *French* of this rank are always with propriety what they would be and what they would appear. They are, in general, men of application, solidity, and even depth. They all have the spirit of their profession, and of their rank. Their politeness has not that insipidity, or monotony, which is owing to want of sentiment. It is shadowed by the most refined discernment, which gives it an air of truth, to which one is obliged to yield. With them are none of those affected absences, those haughty airs, those important phrases, those busy looks, which so ridiculously distinguish the generality of placemen in other nations. They may, without doubt, find something to imitate among us. But we may learn from them to be firm, without haughtiness, to our superiors, sincere, without rudeness, and complaisant, without constraint, to our equals, affable with dignity, and obliging, without familiarity, to our inferiors. From them we shall learn

to soften the harshness we contract from our pedants, and which diffuses itself even over our virtues. Confess, Sir, that, if we are sincere, it is almost always with an offensive bluntness; if we are virtuous, it is with a severity that makes us troublesome; if we have knowledge and abilities, they are seldom without an insolence which fails not to alienate even those whom it subjects. There are in *England* few persons of my acquaintance who have been able to correct this influence of our public education. I love to reckon, among that small number, him whose servant and friend

I cordially am, &c.

LET.

L E T T E R XXIV.

TO LORD VISCOUNT H.

Insufficiency of French books to give a true idea of the state of the Finances of the Kingdom. Difference between the two Powers in that department. General-Farms of ancient institution in France. Observations on the reigns of the house of Valois. Singular ideas of hereditary employments. Short review of the Royal revenues till the reign of Lewis XV. Very judicious administration of the Duke of Sully under Henry IV. Digression on the impossibility of having in France a permanent Marine which may be on a par with the British Marine. That an able politician is not always an able financier. Scrutiny of Cardinal de Richelieu in the latter character. Rational apology of this famous Minister considered in this point of view.

MY LORD,

THE French have not, on the Finances of the Kingdom, any publications which can be compared with ours. In some you see

how things might be on a different footing from what they are : these are observations and arguments, which most commonly do honour only to the good intentions of the theorist. In others, which promise a detail of facts, you have nothing but the name of the objects of the industry of the Financers. The writer tells you on what, and for how much, the tax was laid ; he bewilders you in his innumerable minute particulars, and leaves you in the dark as to what money was really collected, what was its destination, and what its employment. The former want information, the latter courage and sincerity. The state of the debts of *France* seems a secret reserved to the King and his Ministers. It is absolutely impossible for me to serve you, my Lord, in that respect as you desire of me ; and I am sorry for it on your Lordship's account, and on my own. It is a general, but vague, opinion, that the King owes about two thousand millions of livres, or a hundred millions sterling. You will find no exact account of this in the enormous volumes which I send you, as you desire. Take my word for it, your loss is not great. There is so much difference between the two Monarchies in this department, that scarce any thing which has happened in the one is applicable to the other. The study which you propose to yourself will
be

be mere curiosity ; and you may employ your time much better.

HOWEVER, that you may not suspect me of palliating a fit of laziness, it will be a real pleasure to me to give your Lordship a general idea of the administration of the Finances of *France*. The study which you pursue of the history will enable you even to enlarge and particularise it, so that both may be useful and agreeable to you.

THE institution of the General-Farms is commonly ascribed to *Catherine de Medicis*. In fact, the *Italians*, who came to settle in *France* under her Regencies, made that kind of receipt, which was the prevailing one in *Italy*, more general. But the custom of farming the public revenues is as ancient in *France* as the power which the Kings have of disposing of them at their pleasure. As soon as the reunion of many grand fiefs to the Crown, and the humiliation of the great Vassals, had given the descendants of *Hugh Capet* the real possession of the Kingdom, of which he had only the title and honours, it was their business to provide, by their own wealth, for the defence of the Kingdom, and the exigencies of State. The management of the demesns became every day more difficult, because the demesns increased. The necessities of the King, in like manner, became greater in proportion

proportion as his power augmented. His wars were against the great Vassals confederated, or against those among them who were his equals in strength. The demesns, though much increased, were often found insufficient for urgent occasions ; and he was reduced to expedients. The State and the King being in *France* one and the same thing, the distinction in their cash is only for method. The Financiers, whom † *Philip* and *Charles the Fair*, and * *Philip* of *Valois*, deprived either of their estates, or honours, or lives, or of all together, sometimes by their sole authority, sometimes by a legal process, were in general Royal Farmers, charged with having abused their powers in collecting the public revenues.

It was in the reign of the first of those Princes, that the Lords ceased to have their *Gabelles*, that is, their taxes on their subjects, as the Monarch on his, and those taxes were almost arbitrary. We find in the registers the

† [*Philip* IV, or *the Fair*, reigned from 1286 to 1314. To this active Monarch the *French* owe the fixing their Parliament of *Paris*, which had before followed the person of the Prince, and held its assemblies where he judged it most convenient. *Charles* IV, or *the Fair*, his youngest son, reigned from 1322 to 1328. He was the last of the direct descendants of *Hugh Capet*.]

* [*Philip* VI, Count *de Valois*, the first of that house, reigned from 1328 to 1350.]

notification of the Royal Ordinance for the imposition in the countries belonging to the King. But we nowhere find, that, before the edict, it was offered to the deliberation of the different Orders of the State which it taxed.

THE right of Coinage became under *Philip the Fair* an exclusive right of the King, in consequence of an edict of 1313, which so clogged the making of specie, that the Lords chose rather to sell their right than to confine themselves to the burthenfome conditions on which they were allowed to use it. * *Philip the Tall* and *Philip of Valois* laid a tax on salt†. King † *John* assumed to himself the monopoly of it, which he left in administration,

* [This Prince, (*Philip V.*) succeeded his brother *Lewis X.* and reigned from 1316 to 1322.]

† [Our *Edward III.* for that reason, called him the author of the *Salic* law. "The North countries want the degree of heat necessary for the making of salt, and those situations which are beyond the 42d degree of latitude, such as *Spain*, make a salt too corrosive, which eats and destroys the meat instead of preserving it. *France* alone has a temperate climate fit to make salt; and it is indeed what most enriches the Kingdom. Cardinal *de Richelieu*, in his *Political Testament*, says, that "he has known the most intelligent of the Super-Intendants equal the tax gathered from the salt-pans to that which the *Indies* brought the King of *Spain*." *Milor's Elements of the History of France*, Vol. 1.]

† [*John* reigned from 1350 to 1364.]

and

and which * *Henry II* gave to farm. The misfortunes of the wars of the Kings of the house of *Valois* occasioned most of those heavy taxes, which are now the basis of the public revenues. † *Charles VII*, or *the Victorious*, made the first levy of the *Taille*. It was for 1,300,000 livres. *Lewis XI*, his successor, extended it to near five millions. *Charles VIII*, the son of *Lewis*, augmented it one million, and *Lewis XII*, surnamed *the father of his people*, added to it two more. At length *Francis I* doubled the last establishment. Observe the difference of the standard of the coin at different times. Observe that of the prices of provisions. In the time of *Lewis XII*, one *sol* purchased that which at present costs twenty.

EVER since the first of the *Valois*, the King has had some debts. But *Francis I* was the first of those Princes who had the idea of making himself a perpetual resource by borrowing. He settled some annuities at 12 per cent. on *Paris* and *Lyons*; and in the time of his best administration, he thought it advan-

* [*Henry II* reigned from 1546 to 1558.]

† [*Charles VII* reigned from 1421 to 1460. *Lewis XI*, his son, died in 1483. *Charles VIII*, the last of the direct line of *Philip of Valois*, in 1498, and *Lewis XII*, the first and last of his house, in 1513. His successor, *Francis I*, died in 1546.]

tageous to himself not to redeem them. Offices became entirely venal in his reign. This sale of employments has made a ravage in the Finances of *France*, which few of the *French* are willing to perceive. The salaries of the placemen were the annual income of the sum given for the purchase: they became their own property. That sum, it is true, was transferred to the King. But the use, which the Monarch made of it, returned it in circulation; and nothing but the load of the salary remained to the successor. Under each of the Kings who succeeded *Francis I.*, the number of offices and employments has continually increased in all the departments. It seemed, at the death of *Lewis XIV.*[†], as if it could go no higher; and yet it has been considerably augmented in the present reign. If we enquire the total of those payments charged on the cash of the King and of the State, on the clear produce of the sums levied on the people, and which are paid in preference to every other debt, it will appear that they make the chief part of the public debt.

THE inheriting of employments was a very natural consequence of the buying them; the Kings having neglected to inculcate to the possessors, that the purchaser had only paid for his own life. *Henry IV* apprehended how

† [In 1715.]

advantageous this doctrine would be to the State. He had the courage to offer it. But prudence prevented him from establishing it all at once. By setting the legitimation of inheritance to sale, he proved incontestably that that inheritance was an usurpation, an abuse. As his successors ought to have the same extent of authority as himself, he left them at liberty to consider what he had done on that subject as a provisionary regulation, and to substitute, in the room of it, any other more profitable, when circumstances should be favourable to them. This reflection made him content himself with establishing the duty of the *Paulette*. The tax, so called from the name of its inventor, or of its first receiver, is the sixtieth part of the purchase of the employment. The possessor, by paying it annually to the King, may call himself the proprietor of his office; and for want of heirs able to possess it after him, the person whom the King gives him for a successor, is obliged to re-imburse them the first capital. By this regulation of *Henry IV*, the three Monarchs who have reigned since † have been relieved from one third of that hereditary debt. *Lewis XIV* was in circumstances to put the finishing stroke to the plan of his grandfather. But

† [*Lewis XIII*, *XIV*, and *XV*.]

it does not appear that any of his Ministers had the idea of it. What could have hindered him, in the kind of despotism which he had rendered palatable to all the Orders of the State, from making the nation perceive, that an eternal salary is a monstrous obligation; and that the purchaser of an employment ought to think his capital sufficiently advantageous, when it enables him to preserve the employment in his family, as long as it should furnish subjects capable of filling it? The Ordinance might have set forth, that the person employed dying without children, or leaving none that were proper for his profession, or that had a taste for it, the office reverted to the State, to be sold for its advantage on the same terms. From hence to the enjoyment of offices for life there was only one step, which that Prince might have successfully taken amidst the urgent necessities to which he was reduced. The price of employments would perhaps have been lessened. But what their successive sale would have produced would have been a continual supply to the public coffers. The King now reigning is certainly not in a situation to flatter himself with the obedience, of which his predecessor would not have doubted one moment. Yet the patriotic clamours of the great bodies seem to urge him to offer to them that method

thod of relieving the State without oppressing the people. I would venture to lay a wager that the remonstrances would then become very crabbed pieces of rhetoric to the gentlemen-orators.

THE tenth penny on lands is the most natural and most moderate tax, against which a clamour was raised, in 1740, as against a monstrous novelty§. Yet it existed in the reign of *Philip Augustus*†, it was re-established during the imprisonment of *Francis I**. *Lewis XV* has found himself obliged to suppress it. But as the State cannot support itself with nothing, he has substituted the twentieth in the room of it. A second twentieth, and a third twentieth, have been added to the first, which make pretty near the eighth penny. Add the fourth twentieth, and the *French* landholders will be on a par with us, who immediately paid, without murmuring, at the beginning of this war, and who probably shall continue to pay for a long time,

§ ["This tax, it was thought, would raise four millions a year. The Parliament made a strong remonstrance against it, and the President even shed tears when he represented the miseries of the people. The King's answer was more mild than usual; but they were obliged to obey him by registering it." *Universal Modern Hist.* Vol. XV. p. 613.]

† [This Prince reigned from 1180 to 1223.]

* [In 1524.]

the fifth of all our real estates. The effect that the bawlers against the tenth have produced is this, that there are, besides a sol in every twentieth, two sols *per livre*, and other additional fees, which rise higher than the principal tax. Recollect, my Lord, the complaints of the frogs, and what they got by them.

THE troubles of the reign of *Francis I* continued to augment the burthens of the people. The King's revenues were increased one third more than those of his † predecessor. On which it is proper to observe, that the discovery of the new world*, and the commerce of the *Portuguese*, had already considerably enlarged the mass of gold and silver in *Europe*. For a little more than the first half of that reign, great were the misconduct and dissipation. The Monarch's want of application abandoned his people to most of the oppressions of assessment and collection. But in the nine or ten last years of his life, *Francis I* applied himself to business, he understood oeconomy, and even that which is proper for a King. Valuing metals on the present footing, he received pretty near five millions sterling, or a little more than

† [*Lewis XII.*]

* [*By Columbus in 1492.*]

a hundred and twenty millions [of livres] a year. At his death, four hundred thousand gold crowns were found in his coffers, and one quarter of the year was expired, of which the collectors had not returned the revenue into the treasury.

IN the reigns of *Henry II* and his † sons, the levies on the people were much greater, and the revenues of the King much less. The Princes, the Grandees, the Favourites, the Ministers themselves received from the King, as a free gift, such a tax of such a province, or such another of the whole Kingdom; and they had it collected, for their use, by their creatures. Every year, the Monarch borrowed money at enormous interest. Till *Paris* submitted to *Henry IV* †, the finances of *France* had been plundered for more than forty years. The Super-intendant had been the associate of the Farmers-General and private persons. The other Ministers, after his example, took their share in the leases; they were masters of the auction: and they determined in favour of their representatives, at such a price as may be imagined. The Aids of *Normandy*, which actually brought in several millions, had been adjudged to a Farmer for thirty thousand crowns. The Constable

† [*Francis II, Charles IX, and Henry III.*]

† [In 1593.]

[*Montmorency*]

[*Montmorency*] drew nine thousand livres, or nine thousand crowns, from a tax in *Languedoc*, which the Duke of *Sully* contrived to let for a hundred thousand. To give credit to historians for the excesses which they describe, it is necessary to see some particulars of them in the letters of *Henry IV* himself.

SCARCELY was this great Prince in peaceable possession of the throne, than he made the re-establishment of order in the department of the finances his principal concern. He had the skill to place at the head of it the ablest man in his Kingdom, to undertake with judgement, to support with courage, and to execute with success the laborious work of reformation. The Duke of *Sully*, with all the endowments of heart of a perfect Minister, had the turn of mind and extent of genius, which the times and circumstances required. In the succeeding age, when it was the fashion to apply to artificial commerce the most splendid operations of finance and the great talents of the † Chief of that department, this Minister was reproached for having had a very confined understanding, with a multitude of prejudices which impaired what knowledge he had. But it was not in a vast Kingdom, which forty years of civil wars had desolated, and where the traces of high roads

† [*Colbert.*]

could scarce be discovered in lands for the most part uncultivated and over-run with thorns, that a Minister should have given the preference to the arts. This is now acknowledged, though the ideas of agriculture, and of the methods to restore its credit, are still very imperfect. The blindness of *Colbert* is lamented in thinking to make the people acquire riches, before he gave them ease, in endeavouring to inspire them with a taste for superfluities while they wanted necessities. In this he succeeded too well. The people, oppressed more and more with the most substantial misery, pursued with fury the shadow of wealth, and, in spite of conviction, they would not slacken their speed.

SULLY foresaw that some urgent occasions might disturb the management; and he advised the King to be frugal, in order to have in his coffers the resource, which he would have sought in vain, at the moment of a crisis, among his people, labouring for a long course of years under reimbursements. This great man rendered the management direct, prompt, and easy. This was all that could then well be done for the relief of the subjects. He undertook to learn in general and in particular the value of the Kingdom, the rights of the Prince, the abilities of the people, the methods of collection.

Some

Some modern theorists, incapable of working under him, have the confidence to pass judgment on him, and to determine that the method which he pursued was neither the best nor the most easy. But observe, my Lord, in what confusion he found the administration, and that he wanted the assistance which at present would offer itself to a Chief of the Finances endued with his genius and intentions. In five or six years, having no guide but himself, and obliged, at every step, to make his way by authority, or to surmount the obstacles by patience, he did more than the Dauphin, the father of *Lewis XV*, ventured to undertake with the concurrence of regal authority, the affection of all the Orders of the Kingdom, and the information of all the Intendants of provinces. Most of those who have censured the Duke of *Sully* were possessed with the prejudice, still prevailing, that to enrich *France*, it is necessary to begin by opening for her the channels of great commerce, and by considering the arts, and the industry bestowed on them, as the principal nourishment of the finances.

SULLY was not exempt from prejudices. He derived from his birth, which was truly noble, an esteem in preference for the military profession, which he always considered as his own, and some ideas on the nobleness
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of extraction which must appear *Gothic* to the majority of *French* Lords at present. But is it not a mark of ignorance to judge of a Statesman from arguments which were to him only superabundant arguments? He says, that “the *French* nation ought not to be forced out of her warlike character; and he would have the King make his land-forces his principal object.” It is demonstrated that a wise administration will render every increase of welfare subordinate to the principle which preserves the existence. This observation, my Lord, ought to be sufficient to make us easy as to that Marine enthusiasm, which has seized the *French*. It has false foundations, it must therefore necessarily fall. Allowing that *England* is, in all respects, no more than a half of *France*, it will still remain certain, that, as long as we are well governed, our Marine will be superior to that of our rivals. It is at the option of *Great Britain* to be entirely and solely a Maritime Power. Whatever the King of *France* may do, his Marine can never be more to him than a diversion. *France* is a *Terrene* Power. Superior to the *English* and *Dutch* at sea, by efforts of which I allow that they are capable, the *French* would soon find themselves in a violent state which they could not bear. They have the united forces of the North and of *Germany* to fear. The
Swiss

Swiss and the King of *Sardinia* may have an interest or reason to attack them; and on the footing on which those Powers are at present, they would be terrible enemies. The *Dutch* and the *Austrian Netherlands* do not allow an absolute security. In the present system, quite favourable as it appears, *France* ought to apply her utmost attention to her army. In the time of *Sully*, there was no established system. *Italy*, *Germany*, *Spain*, and the sixteen Provinces of the *Low Countries* were subject to the House of *Austria*, which straitened the Kings of *France* on all their frontiers. Those Princes seemed for a long time to have only thought of being on the defensive; and it was not probable, that, after denying themselves the conquest of the New World, they should succeed in partaking its direct commerce with the conquerors. *Sully* did not proscribe manufactures. But he gave agriculture the preference to them, as he knew it to be capable of supplying the nation with convenient barter, for the commodities which the others would bring from the four parts of the world. Manufactures appeared to him an accessory, which he justly feared might be taken for the principal, and before he offered it to the *French*, he wished that they might be so attached to the cultivation of lands, which is of the first necessity, as to adhere to it with the obstinacy

of habit, in spite of the charms which they might find in novelty.

SULLY had little regard for banks of credit. A severe oeconomist, he thought that the great matter was to exempt himself from the necessity of borrowing; and his aim was to procure for the King that true opulence. He had already delivered the collection and administration from the greatest part of their idle expences. Those which he left them did not amount to a fifth of the real impost. He freed the State from a hundred millions of debts extraordinary, by some operations equally approved by wisdom and equity. No more than a hundred of them remained at the death of the King, his worthy master; and he had amassed thirty-six of them in his coffers. It was necessary, in order firmly to establish the welfare of *France* in this department, that the Duke of *Sully* should have continued ten or twelve years longer at its head. This great man would have reduced his practice into a compact and demonstrable system. He was as able a master in internal policy, as Cardinal *de Richelieu*, whose plan is still pursued, in foreign policy.

THE Regency of *Mary de Medicis* † diffi-

† [From 1600 to 1617, during the minority of her son *Levois XIII.*]

pated

pated the savings made by the King her husband. She augmented the debts, she perplexed all the labour of the sage *Sully*. *Villeroy* and *Jeannin*, who embarked imprudently in this enterprize, proved that a man of finance is a particular *species*, of which a man of genius may be styled the *genus*, but that it is not synonymous with a Statesman: Those able politicians found themselves misplaced in the post of *Sully*, and they distinguished themselves in it only by their incapacity. The Constable *de Luynes*, who dared at the age of twenty-two be more than Prime Minister, may be applauded in history for not having done all the mischief that there was reason to apprehend from his inexperience. It was a great happiness for the people, that the favourite made his advantage of the spoils of

§ ["*Sully's* differences with the Princes, with many great Lords, and the principal favourites, openly in Council, his opposing warmly the dissipation of the money with which he had been entrusted, &c. raised a very strong party against himself. The Chancellor, the Secretary *Villeroy*, and the President *Jeannin*, who had never been his friends, now placed themselves at the head of his enemies, and his known aversion to that dissipation, which was become the ruling maxim, left him no resources: he made the best terms he could; and having surrendered his important employments of Superintendent of the Finances, and Governor of the *Bastille*, &c. in February 1610, retired to his own House of *Sully*."] *Univ. Mod. Hist. Vol. ix. p. 345.*

Marshal *d'Ancre*. That rich escheat having at once made his fortune, a greediness for money was not his ruling vice. Literally speaking, *France* was then governed by divine providence. The Kingdom was a ship without sails and without helm, buffeted by the winds and waves, and destitute of a pilot. Human prudence cannot account for her preservation.

CARDINAL *de Richelieu* was by no means a great man of finance. But perhaps he might have attained it in the same degree in which he was a Statesman, if *France* had been, as to her foreign and domestic connections, in the situation in which *Great Britain* was at the death of *Queen Anne*. We have not, my Lord, a finer æra in our history. We enjoyed the highest degree of respect abroad; the regal prerogative, reduced within just limits which were clearly marked, was in agreement with the liberty of the nation. We had no debts but such as it is proper that a State should have, to interest subjects and foreigners in her welfare. We were at the height of our prosperity; and some patriot Ministers would only have wanted a moderate share of genius to have established us in it for a long course of years. It was quite the reverse in *France*, when *Richelieu* entered into the Ministry. The arms and alliance of
that

that Crown were despised in *Europe*, and the Great divided, it may be said, with the King the regal authority in the Kingdom. The department of war required all the attention of the Minister, who could not consider the other departments but as they were connected with it, and so far as they contributed to the prodigious consumption which that made of men and money. To maintain five or six armies, to subsidise allies, to purchase and encourage intelligence, to protect dependents, it was necessary for him continually to contrive new taxes on the people. It was war which recommended to him the Marine. Yet it may be conjectured, by his obstinacy as to the post of High-Admiral, which he constantly kept united to that of Prime Minister, under the title of Super-intendancy of the seas, that he was apprised of all the importance of that department. It is evident that he apprehended that a High-Admiral having views different from his, would divide the men and money of the Kingdom with the Land-Generals; that the people would be alienated from their taste for arms by the allurements of the gains of great commerce; that at length the King would suffer himself to be seduced by the ambition of conquering in the New World, before he had secured his superiority in the Old. This great politician, the lover
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and patron of all the sciences, could not but be a friend to all the arts. But the well supported encouragement of the arts is expensive; and if it be not steadily supported, it is productive of more inconveniences than advantages. This encouragement consists principally of advances. But circumstances did not allow him to lend the public treasures to the succeeding generation on such a fund. He kept up the manufactures which the foregoing reign had introduced: he did not oppose the new manufactures which some private persons were desirous of raising and cherishing at their own expence. He seemed to think that the King did enough in that respect, if he kept in the Kingdom, by such manufactures as were absolutely necessary, some part of the money which foreign industry would have drawn out of it.

CERTAIN it is that peace would have given the Cardinal different ideas, if he had survived it. His principles were not prejudices. I do not find them described in history, but by historians incapable of judging of them. *Richelieu* loved the people; he esteemed the nation. What is called his hardness of heart, his cruelty, was undoubtedly varnished in his eyes by these two affections. He was desirous that the people should be submissive to the King, because
that

that submission appeared to him the first step to arrive at happiness. He hated all those proud and factious Grandees, who made all the Orders of the Kingdom the instruments of their passions. He had an eye on the Parliaments, because he had a thorough knowledge of the nature of a Monarchical State, to which the pretensions of those great bodies are the most dangerous corrosive, and which, sooner or later, either finds itself reduced to nothing by their usurpations, or sees itself compelled to become despotic, in order to get the superiority over them. He was desirous, one may say, to level the Nobility; because he considered the Lords as so many luxurious boughs, which robbed the trunk, as well as the branches, of the nutritious juices. By giving the people the King for their only master, he delivered them from tyrants. He oppressed some provinces beyond all bounds. But that was not by such arguments as those of *Colbert*. He did not think, that the people resembled mules, who are only tractable and discreet when they are overloaded. He saw that Governors were petty Kings in their Governments; and it was to weaken those ambitious mutineers, that he impoverished the countries where they were more obeyed than the King, and from whence

they derived all their resources, and all their hopes, in their frequent insurrections.

HENCE, my Lord, without doubt arose that unwarrantable opinion which is ascribed to him, that dissipation in the finances is to the people a necessary evil, to the Sovereign an advantage. You will have the key to his riddle, if you consider that he could devise no better counter-battery to oppose to the great, than to multiply in the Third-estate the offices and employments which attach the most wealthy of that Order more immediately to the King's service by the interest of their fortune. With this idea, which is strictly just, he created a prodigious number of places in the civil establishment, in the finances, and in the municipal administration. He multiplied, almost to infinity, those near connections of the Plebeian with the Court. He had so good an opinion of those who should succeed him at the head of affairs, as not to think them blind to their own times and to his. He might, without imprudence, provide as well as possible for the present, without regarding the future, as to which his successors would, as one may say, have elbow-room.

Those who measure Cardinal *de Richelieu* by the same scale as a *Colbert* or a *Desmarets*, suppose this great man only attentive to the first finance which those offices brought into the

the King's coffers. They insist that he saw nothing farther than the expedient to gain money. Those who are fond of imagining that this powerful genius had no extravagances, pretend that the debt, which he caused the State to contract, displayed itself to him with every possible consequence, but that he considered it as one of those inconveniences, which a true politician overlooks, without scruple, in order to attain a more important object.

LEWIS XIII., when the Cardinal was his Prime Minister, generally levied 80 millions of livres annually, that is to say, a little less than seven millions sterling, reckoning the mark of silver at 27 livres; by the testimony of the Cardinal, scarce thirty-five came into his Majesty's coffers. It is a mistake to think, that the remaining forty-five were squandered in the collection. The greater part was applied towards paying the interest of the debt; the Cardinal could have no other meaning. The people, it is true, were impoverished. But the Kingdom was at a crisis; and its money followed or preceded its armies, which were almost always on foreign ground. The King was very nearly freed by his Minister from some troublesome attentions, of which his predecessors had contracted a habit, towards the Clergy. The Cardinal, than whom

no Ecclesiastic was more ardent as to the honorary privileges of the Prelates, combated, with no less spirit than success, the civil pretensions of the whole Order. He scarce left it the assuming right of giving the name of a *free gift* to the contribution which it furnished towards the exigences of the public. The Clergy had quibbled, under *Henry IV*, in regard to the annual gift of 1,300,000 francs; and on an annual average, it appears, that, in each of the ten last years of *Lewis XIII*, the supply, under all its denominations, was about four millions, which may be valued at eight, present currency. *Richelieu* was no oeconomist, because he knew not how to limit the necessities of the State. He resembles a bold husbandman, who employs himself with grubbing up, and who overburthens his family with labours, in order to procure ease for his posterity. After the war, which he kindled and fomented to make *France* perfectly independent on other Powers, had been terminated by a peace pretty nearly such as he had promised himself, oeconomy became the first talent of the Ministers who succeeded him. He had enabled them to recall the forty millions a year that had been alienated to recover the superiority of *France* in *Europe*, and to re-establish the Regal authority in the Kingdom.

THIS,

THIS, my Lord, is, I think, enough for this time. I must recollect myself in order to describe to you, with exactness and rapidity, the two next reigns. If you think me too serious, I am sorry for it. You must consider yourself as the occasion of it.

I am, &c.



LET.

LETTER XXV.

TO THE SAME.

Continuation of historical and political considerations on the general administration of the finances in France. Shocking picture of Cardinal Mazarin in that department. Mistake of M. de Voltaire corrected. Scrutiny of the administration during the life of Mazarin. That there then appeared a scheme of reformation very like those which now make the most noise: that it was derided, and why. Conjectures on the genius and talents of the Superintendent Fouquet. Enquiry into those of M. Colbert, his successor. How luxury should be adapted to great States. Double genius of Commerce in a Minister. Different success of great and small commercial States. Known debts of Lewis XIV at his death. Discredit of the Royal bills in his last years.

MY LORD,

I HAD no need of a fresh invitation to send your Lordship my second letter. You would have received it sooner, had not a violent cold in my head almost entirely deprived me of sight for two days.

However,

However, I have a real pleasure in being assured that I have placed your object in a true light; and I shall proceed the more boldly with my reflections.

CARDINAL *Mazarin*, whom several *French* writers have compared to *Richelieu*, had nothing in common with him, but titles. That *Italian*, having arrived by very crooked paths at the highest dignity in the Kingdom of *France*, entered into the Ministry with a concerted design of enriching himself expeditiously. He had no affection for the *French*, because he had no title to their affection. Distrusting his own abilities, and the favour of the Queen, which was his only support, he thought himself liable to be sent back every moment into his own country; and though he had had a soul so noble as to chuse the most honourable kind of wealth, this fear of disgrace would have brought him back to the love of money; an *Italian* Cardinal wanting only money, to be invulnerable in his own country to all the strokes aimed at him by justice and fortune in a foreign country. *Mazarin* considered great offices of State and rich benefices as accessaries which he ought not to neglect. But he was not the less careful to fill his coffers. With these dispositions of a house-steward, he proceeded accordingly. He dreaded nothing so much as seeing the war ended.

ended, to which the disorder of the finances might be ascribed. Eager to make his advantage of the confusion in which he found them, he had a share in all the bargains, and in all the farms. He gained an admittance into them, without furnishing any funds, by obliging the Farmers to reckon as his quota the favour which he granted them in the determinations and collection. In a few years, he was the greatest and most rigorous State creditor. The private sales of honours, employments, benefices, and pardons, the share which he procured himself of the produce of a number of vexatious suits, were, with that tax, the paths by which he advanced to opulence, as long as he could doubt of the solidity of his fortune in *France*. Imagine, my Lord, what then must have been the fate of the people, the Minister being obliged to purchase the complaisance and friendship of the Princes and Grandees, by refusing nothing to their avarice. The effects of the Third-estate were pillaged; and as they were not sufficient for the number of blood-suckers, who must necessarily be glutted with them, the Cardinal was obliged to begin upon those of the lawyers, towards whom he would, without doubt, have acted in like manner, when the Parliaments were roused by his bad administration.

I cannot conceive what the illustrious *Voltaire* means, by saying that "*Mazarin* was poor, when he first retired in the time of the *Fronde* †." Accused of misdemeanours in the supreme administration of the finances, and of having made his advantage of the misery of the people, he must have carefully concealed from his accusers the proofs of their charge. But your Lordship will not be mistaken in it, if you observe, that, in the year 1646, he endeavoured to secure the Principality of ‡ *Piombino* to his family. Methodical and circumstantial as he was, he did not think of giving a Principality to his relations, without having enough in reserve to strengthen and secure such an establishment. For my part, I suspect that the prudent *Fabert* had good proofs of the constant friendship of the Cardinal, when he obstinately persisted in being one of his warmest partisans during his eclipse.

† [Qu. Where? In his *Age of Lewis XIV*, Chap. 4, after mentioning the little army of seven thousand men which escorted the Cardinal back to France, this writer says, "In a declaration published at that time, it was told the King, that *Mazarin* had actually raised these troops with his own money; which must disprove the opinion of those who have affirmed, that, at his first retirement out of the Kingdom, he was in a state of indigence."]

‡ [A City of Italy, on the coast of *Tuscany*, between *Catello* and *Leghorn*.]

I have

I have a notion that the City of † *Sedan*, of which he was almost proprietary Governor, and which was then reckoned one of the strongest towns in *Europe*, was the place where *Mazarin* had deposited his gains and his thefts.

AT the death of Cardinal *de Richelieu*, the King levied on his people eighty millions of livres, forty-six of which were lost in coming into his Majesty's coffers: three years were anticipated. *Lewis XIII* did not survive his Minister long enough for his finances to be sensible of the oeconomy which was natural to him. He left them in the same state to the Queen his widow, who did not delay to augment their disorder. The first operation of the Regency, in that department, was a loan of twelve millions of livres, an operation always of bad omen at the beginning of a new Ministry, but which it is proper to make much the greater when it is indispensably necessary to have recourse to it. New Ministers have every prejudice in their favour. The Public is inclined to magnify the faults of Ministers when displaced, to conceive all the hopes which they are willing to give it, and to exhaust itself to the utmost, that it may not be reproached with

† [A City of *France* in *Champagne* on the frontiers of *Luxembourg*. It formerly had Princes of its own, but was united to the Crown in the year 1642.]

occasioning

occasioning their miscarriage. The Queen might have made an advantage of the first heat, to disclose some extraordinary scenes, and to strike the grandest strokes. No one would have complained, if she had only performed part of her brilliant promises. The war, which was carried on with as much success as in the most fortunate years of Cardinal *de Richelieu*, satisfied the most untoward minds: there was no one who dared to think that it was in the power of the Regency to ease the people, and to lessen the subsidies given in the former reign. But the Court no longer displaying that firmness and uniformity of principles which made the subjects respect those political views which they did not penetrate; all the Orders of the State began, by insensible degrees, to examine whether that war was as necessary as Cardinal *de Richelieu* had made them believe, and whether it was not time to put an end to it. They enquired whether the successor of the Minister of *Louis XIII* did not find some private advantage in continuing it. They examined into the employment of the public treasure, and as they soon discovered mismanagement, they were persuaded that the supplies were greater than the exigences of the State required, and that it was necessary to remove the pretext. Hence murmurs, discontent, insurrection.

IN those times of trouble, a reformer ventured to make himself heard. He assumed the text and tone of the moderns against the Farms and the Farmers, against the impost, the assessment, and the collection. He proposed a total revolution in the system of the finances. He projected no less than the abolition of the *Tailles*, the excise, the salt-duties, in short every object of farming and administration, the farms and administration themselves, in order to retain only the demesnes with the customs. The taxes of every kind were to be replaced by a poll-tax of a sol a day on the rich, and persons of a moderate fortune, both comprised under the name of Substantial, and whose number was computed at six millions †. Perhaps, in the bosom of peace, the idea would have deserved the attention of Government. But in the midst of a crisis, it was deemed extravagant; and circumstances rendered the term sufficiently just. The quickness and ease of collecting are never more necessary than on urgent occasions; but the urgency of the occasion is the very cause which prevents them from being then established. We cannot sow at the instant when we must reap. However, my Lord, if you reflect on a daily poll-tax judiciously settled, you will

† See Vol. I. p. 240—245.

find that its idea is vastly superior to all that modern speculatists have offered.

AFTER the peace concluded at *Munster*, [1647,] the war which continued with *Spain*, left to herself, may be said to have been no more than a game for a Kingdom, in which the Nobility were desirous of being engaged. The time for delivering the King and the State from the greatest part of their debts was the more favourable, as, their credit being absolutely sunk, their bills were at half their value on the Exchange. But this fall of the notes was the very mine which the Cardinal intended to spring. His agents bought those effects at their lowest price; and at the time when he knew how to force the Exchequer to receive them at prime cost, he made them have the preference in being paid off. To this purpose he employed most part of the funds produced by the first Tontine which appeared in *France*. It was published in 1653, and took the name of the *Italian* its inventor, who was named *Tonti*. It was for a million and twenty-five thousand livres a year. Your Lordship has reflections enough of your own to form a judgment of Tontines. I am of opinion, that an inviolable fidelity to the articles of their establishment makes them the most certain and least dangerous resource of
great

great States, provided the annual interests of the capitals be put at the lowest rate *.

DURING the six last years of his life, *Mazarin* was greedy of money by habit. The taste for rapine, as strong in him as the passion of hoarding, made him take delight, in his greatest prosperity, in those mean measures, which he had employed with caution, and some degree of shame, when his fortune was unsettled. He was seen to connect himself with some pirates who annoyed commerce, and to join with them in the robberies

* [Dr. Price, whose precision as a Mathematician is only equalled by his excellence as a Divine, at the same time that he has shewn that the several annuity societies, lately established in London, are only splendid bubbles, calculated to dazzle and deceive, has proved that our national debt, enormous as it is, may be every year reduced and gradually paid off, either by annuities to terminate within a given period, or by a sinking fund permanently established and faithfully applied. By the latter method (to which he gives the preference) supposing only one hundred thousand pounds annually saved and applied to the discharge of an equal debt, bearing interest at 4 per cent. at the end of ninety-five years the nation might be eased of four millions a year in taxes, and above 100 millions of its debts would be insensibly discharged. And the higher the interest, the sooner would such a fund pay off the principal: as one hundred millions borrowed at 8 per cent. would thus be paid off in fifty-six years; that is in thirty-nine years less than the same sum borrowed at four. See Dr. Price's *Observations on Reversionary Payments, &c.*]

for

for which the allies of *France* demanded justice of her †. He disposed of the King's treasures with absolute authority, and he caused some millions to be delivered, without giving any orders or written receipts for them to the Super-intendant. At his death, the taxes were ninety millions. The charges of collecting were enormous. The Farmers themselves were ready to allow that they amounted to thirty *per cent.* and that the Minister allowed them to levy more. The Court had consumed two years in advance.

COLBERT had been the confident of *Mazarin*. Several Memoirs of that time say that he had been his steward. Be that as it may, the recommendation of the dying Minister gave him access to the young King, whose favour he gained by the particulars, which he was able to give him, of the collusions of his deceased master, and of the subaltern Ministers. As only a moderate share of genius is necessary to cure, in a society, such evils, as are

† [*"Mazarin* had amassed near two hundred millions of our present money. And we find it affirmed in several Memoirs, that he gained part of it by such means as were beneath the dignity of his place. We are told by these writers, that he shared the profits arising from prizes taken by privateers. This, however, was never proved; yet the *Dutch* suspected him of it; and they would never have suspected Cardinal *Richelieu*." *Voltaire.*]

known

known, and which are only abuses, there was no probability of his charging *M. Fouquet*, whom the death of the Cardinal had left at the head of the Finances, with not having abilities sufficient to restore order in that department. Thus he only attacked the Super-intendant on his pride and ambition, which could only make him a careful oeconomist for his private interest, and by no means for that of the Kingdom.

HOWEVER, *M. Fouquet* being no longer constrained by a patron, who was a tyrant, began in such a manner, as made the most flattering hopes be conceived of his administration. Give no credit, my Lord, to those dogmatical historians, who affirm, without proofs, that the Super-intendant expended sixteen millions on the entertainment which he gave to *Lewis XIV* at his house at *Vaux*.

† [“This palace and the gardens had cost *Fouquet* eighteen millions of livres, which are equal to thirty-six of the present currency. He had built it twice over, and had purchased three entire villages, the ground of which was inclosed in his immense gardens; which were partly laid out by *Le Notre*, and were then considered as the finest in *Europe*. . . This feast was superior to those which *Mazarin* had made, not only in magnificence but in taste. . . Had it not been for the presence of the Queen-mother, *Fouquet* would have been arrested at *Vaux* on the very day of the entertainment.” *Age of Lewis XIV*, Ch. 24.]

That

That sum amounts to fourteen hundred thousand pounds sterling, present currency, and now, when dissipation and folly have more than doubled their demands, the most ingenious giver of entertainments might boldly be defied to squander this in one, unless he threw gold out at the windows. *M. Fouquet* remitted to the people, at one time, twenty millions arrears of the *Taille*; and as his taste, concurring with that of the young King as to magnificence, prevented him from entering on plans of mere oeconomy, he thought to open new channels, in order to increase by foreign money the mass that was in the Kingdom. The honour of the first ideas of the *French* Ministry on the most lucrative part of navigation ought to be ascribed to him. *Colbert* would have been more solid, if he had pursued them longer before he took wing.

THE difficulty of forming a Marine does not consist in the difficulty of having ships and sailors. Five years labour in the dock-yards of *France*, and an order from the King strictly obeyed for that short space of time, would be sufficient to carry the Royal Marine to its just degree of power. The point is, to insure to those ships and seamen the continuance of their cruises and of their pay. Sixty thousand sailors are not too many during a war. But what will they do, how will they live, in
time

time of peace? We value our coal-mines, and our *Jamaica* trade, chiefly for the constant employment which both of them furnish to our seamen; and we are much in the right. The *Dutch* do not confine the whole importance of their fisheries to the immense gains which they derive from them. Their Statesmen there see the support of ten or twelve thousand seamen, always ready to serve the Republic, without being a burthen to her. They see an inexhaustible seminary of mariners, who maintain themselves at their own expence, a work-house in which these men, so necessary to the State, labour on their own account, and keep themselves in exercise at a business, which, to be well performed, allows of no interruption in the performance of it. M. *Louquet* seemed aware of this essential point. By laying a duty of 50 sols a ton on foreign freight, he gave the *French* the whole advantage of the coasting-trade in all the ports of the Kingdom. This was the foundation-stone for an Ordinance of the same kind as our Act of navigation, to which we are indebted for our superiority. M. *Fouquet* encouraged the trade with the Colonies already established in *Africa* and *America*, he was the patron of arts and sciences, he encouraged every talent. In short, he proved himself, in my opinion, a Minister replete with

with grand ideas, and capable of successfully contributing to render the reign of the King his master no less elegant than brilliant. But he was not in place long enough for us to judge whether he had formed a system.

COLBERT, who succeeded him, freed himself, by a prudent modesty, from the greatest embarrassments of his post. Only styled Comptroller-General of the Finances, and having the King's ear, he could undertake the greatest projects, without any other uneasiness as to the success, than that of a courtier who makes every thing subservient to the desire of pleasing his Prince. *France* would have attained to the highest degree of the most lasting opulence, if *Colbert* had been a Statesman, and a reasoner, like the Duke of *Sully*. He at first made himself agreeable to the people, by remitting them six millions of taxes†, by suppressing a great number of offices ruinous to the State, by reducing that of exempted and privileged persons, who devolved on the people such employments as were least susceptible of immunity, by establishing a Chamber of Justice for calling to an account the Farmers and Financers. This operation,

† [Viz. All those taxes, which they owed the King from the year 1647 to 1656; particularly three millions of the *Tailles*. *Voltaire*.]

which is always dangerous, rarely well supported, and still more rarely conducted without injustice and partiality, might have been directed by *Colbert* in such a manner, as to have none of its usual inconveniences. By transacting business for the Cardinal, who had had an interest in common with the Farmers, he might have known the road which each of them pursued towards wealth, and the irregularity of their steps. He might have taxed precisely the restitution which they owed to the State, and that which they were capable of supporting. These were substantial advantages, on which he might have depended with some reason. But the operation had its inconveniences with which he was astonished, and which disconcerted him, because his penetration had not even conjectured them. Thinking that he had no concern but with the Financers, he scarce knew where he was before he saw their embarrassment become matter of public uneasiness and a general alarm. The interest which the *Substantial* Public took in their fate made him think that all the money in the Kingdom was in their hands: he deemed it impossible to make a thorough removal; and considering that impossibility falsely presumed of making shift entirely without the Farmers, he supposed that the State ought to restore them to their

their former confidence in her, by making it all their own.

FROM that moment *M. Colbert* lost sight of every principle of good and wise administration applicable to circumstances. Money being, in his view, the only riches, he mistook the instrument of circulation for the instrument of creation. His experience constituted all his studies, and he had none but in little matters. By increasing the latter, he thought he should be qualified to labour in great; he thought that he departed out of his sphere by enlarging it; he mistook for strokes and efforts of genius all the steps which he went out of the only path which he knew: in short, his prejudices were his principles. He neglected agriculture, he even discouraged it, by clogging its freedom in the traffic of its produce. The work of manufactures appeared to him a better, and indeed the only method to draw money from abroad: he was born a tradesman. He saw in work-houses and shops all the internal commerce of the Kingdom, and in artisans all the people of *France*, whom he thought he could make as happy as possible, by keeping corn and bread at a low price. He imagined, that arts could be carried to perfection, by procuring them a superabundant number of hands. The evil was soon felt by the diminution of the produce of the *Tailles*. But *Colbert* mistook the

real cause of it, and by a way of reasoning entirely new, he ascribed it to the too great number of exempted and privileged persons. It was natural for the old possessors of immunities to prevent the receipt being increased, but it was not possible for them to make it be lowered. This loss of substance manifested a new malady. During twenty years that M. *Colbert* was at the head of the Finances, the King had only about eight years war. The armies were always victorious, and they were not far distant from the frontier, but only during one campaign*. Yet the mass of money was not augmented in the Kingdom, in proportion to the increase which the general mass of *Europe* received from the *East* and *West Indies*. How is this to be reconciled with that immense Commerce, which does honour to that Minister? It is pretended, that *Colbert* alone was able to preserve his work, and the decay of Commerce and the Marine, the disorder in the Finances, are imputed to the loss which *France* sustained in that illustrious man. I scarce know any reputation more freely given. Was it a proof of the goodness of his system, that it could not be supported but by the inventor?

* [Viz. in 1672, when *Lewis XIV* invaded *Holland*.]

It would be easy to demonstrate, that all which the talents of *Colbert* could effect was, at the most, to prolong the delusion. For want of foundations cemented with patience and discernment, the building would have tottered even before his eyes, as it fell, notwithstanding the care of his successors. *M. Phelipeaux*, Minister of the Marine after *Seignelai*, the son of *Colbert*, was so much in favour with the King, as to balance *Louvois* in his mind, and to obtain from him the support of his department in its original splendor: his father was Chancellor, or Comptroller-General of the Finances, and in those two employments he could make his opinion in Council respected. But the gains of the mercantile Marine had never made amends for the expences of the royal Marine, and the latter was decayed. The two Marines had not kept an equal pace. I am ready to allow, that it was an army conducted with too much rapidity by a General who left his provisions far behind him, and who should, at all events, have fallen back in order to be near them.

COLBERT discharged, in twenty years, very near half the debts which *Mazarin's* Ministry, so much decried, had left. But he did not liquidate them to the satisfaction of the State-creditors. Transfers and re-transfers of part

diminished the capitals, reduced the interest. The alienations were redeemed, one half by authority, the other by the subtlety of calculation. Most of these operations invaded the ancient resources of the Kings in times of distress, by making their engagements liable to be revised, explained. Some old taxes were abolished, but this was in order to substitute new taxes in their room. *M. Colbert* knew not the perpetual funds of redemption which *France* has within herself; simple ideas escape warm imaginations. The expedients, to which he had recourse, had nothing new but the name, with a refinement of arithmetic. He himself, in 1682, if a compiler more laborious than methodical may be believed, made the annual revenues of the State amount to no more than 90 millions of livres, which were reduced to 84 at his first entrance on the Ministry in 1661. The extraordinaries promised no more than twenty-five millions additional. The total of the receipt was no more than a hundred and fifteen or a hundred and twenty millions; and the expence of the year amounted to a hundred and ninety. Besides, the King had taken and consumed fifteen millions on the year 1683.

WITH the support of the regal authority, then all-powerful, *Colbert* changed the tastes
and

and the manners of the whole nation. I love to hear the illustrious *Voltaire* praise him with enthusiasm†: it is the elogium of a lover of the arts. But politicians will always reproach that Minister for carrying luxury and pride immediately to excess in a poor nation, into which those vices should not have been introduced, but at the sequel of a long opulence. They will allow no merit to his administration but that of novelty. Even in the most disastrous times, *France* drew to herself money from abroad by the sale of her productions. Manufactures were created there together with the knowledge of the uses of their materials, which she had within herself. It was to the increase and perfection of those national manufactures that a judicious Minister would have directed his chief attention. *Colbert* took from *Venice* her glasses‡, he divided with *Genoa* the velvets and damasks: he would have been much more serviceable to *France*, if he had collected all the linnen-trade of the *Low-Countries*, if he had cured

† [See his *Age of Lewis XIV*, Ch. 30 and 32 in particular, where *Colbert* is styled "the *Mæcenæ* of all the arts, the reviver of the industry of the nation, the father and founder of the *French* commerce, &c.]

‡ ["In the year 1666, as fine glasses began to be made as those of *Venice*, which till then had constantly furnished all *Europe*; and they were soon after made of a size and beauty superior to any made elsewhere." *Voltaire*.]

us of the boldness of disputing with her in regard to those manufactures, in which she has been obliged for a long time past to yield to us the superiority.

YOUR Lordship will allow, with the lovers of the arts, that luxury is the characteristic of a rich and powerful State, with only a reserve of putting your own construction on the power of a State absorbed in luxury. But you will find, that this luxury ought to be rated by the materials with which the country supplies or may supply it. Otherwise, it is a destructive dissipation; and a great State feels all the inconveniences of it as much as a small one. *Great Britain*, whom her wealth, whether real or fictitious, supports at such a height, has still in her luxury some reserves and restrictions, which she will not despise without suffering by it. She did not enter into that immense commerce, which is admired and envied, till after she had secured domestic quiet, and carried her internal commerce to its utmost extent. From thence she may promise herself a longer duration of her greatness. She first trafficked with her own productions; and she amassed, in about a hundred years, those internal riches which she began with this century to improve abroad. Her country, not less populous than her towns, and always cultivated more
and

and more, has only supplied manufactories and navigation with those hands for which it had no work. Her great manufactories have taken their materials from the three Kingdoms; and it is by barter derived from her soil that she has procured the gold and silver which she has sent to the *East Indies*. If notwithstanding the solidity of this base, our dear country does not maintain her great elevation, but by the means of art and industry, what would it have been if she had taken, in the reign of *Charles II*, the flight which she has taken now? Her greatness would have been a meteor, which, by disappearing, would have involved the succeeding generations in darkness. A taste for commerce in a Minister may justly be compared to the taste of a scholar for mathematics. Both of them do not long apply to them, without despising the practical principles, which are the useful parts of each of those sciences. They carry their speculations too far, and rush into infinity, from which they do not suffer more than enough to bring them back to reality. *Colbert* would have been more than a celebrated man, if such a Chief as *Sully* had had him under his direction. This Super-intendant, equally vast and extensive in his oeconomy, would have furnished him with the first funds for his department,

ment, by apprising him that, from that time forward, he must find in the commerce itself the means sufficient to increase it and to support it in its increase. *Colbert* being master of the finances, blended all the cash, and did not, or pretended not to perceive, that it was at the expence of natural commerce, that he made artificial commerce flourish.

WITH more justice and exactness in his combinations, *Colbert* would not have thought of rendering *France* the competitor and rival of the Republic of *Holland*. A small State may give herself up to commerce, without setting herself any bounds, because being, as it were, no more than a point on the globe, she can never grasp the whole globe, and supply traffic from herself alone to all the lines of the circumference. After her strongest and most successful efforts, she has some new objects still remaining. Her enterprises are not great, but in comparison with her littleness. Her wealth is of the same nature: and she becomes an object of envy and jealousy to other States, without necessarily becoming an object of their hatred. This, my Lord, was the radical principle of the vast commerce of the *Phanicians*, *Venetians*, *Genoese*, and *Portuguese*: this now is the source of the opulence of the *Dutch*. None of the great Powers took umbrage at the avarice and welfare of those small States;

States; because each of them was sensible, that, by turning her views that way, she would there make the greatest efforts, and would have the most brilliant success: their prosperity was considered as the just reward of a labour and industry which was given up to them. *Tyre, Venice, and Holland* would probably always have found the great Powers in this disposition, if their wealth had not emboldened them to vie in strength with the States, which they surpassed in riches, if they had not dared to struggle with them, and oppose their designs. To chastise the ambitious State, they declared against the commercial State. *Carthage, England, and France*, were destined by their internal power to snatch, at their first sight, the success which small States do not experience till after they are arrived at their † apogée. Each of these Powers, by applying herself principally to commerce, would have declared that she intended to usurp it totally and entirely; because the number of her people, and the extent of her dominions, put it in her power. According to the nature and common course of things, there is a confederacy against them, and consequently in the same proportion as they increase in riches,

† [A point in the heavens, in which the sun, or a planet, is at the greatest distance possible from the earth in her whole revolution.]

they

they approach to destruction. The address of our King *William* in making all *Europe* take the alarm at *France* has brought that Crown before us near that inevitable period. We must, necessarily, have our turn, and *Great Britain* will attain it, as soon as *France* shall have a declaimer with organs as proper for that political office as were those of our *William III.* Let us suppose, that the commerce of the whole universe is not sufficient for ten millions of *English* in the two worlds, if they should apply themselves to it, as the only object of their study and industry; it will, nevertheless, be certain, that it cannot be maintained, but as a conquest, and by force of arms. Now, can any thing be more absurd, than to imagine that a Monarchy, exposed to weak or gloomy reigns, to minorities and regencies, should struggle for ever with success against all *Europe*, combined for her humiliation? Without doubt, my Lord, *Great Britain* must lower her flight. *Europe* will remind us of the balance of commerce, as she has reminded *France* of the balance of power: the address of our Statesmen will immortalise them, by contriving for us a descent which shall not be a fall, by making us rather resemble *Holland* than *Carthage* and *Venice*. The great States of *Europe*, should imitate the *Chinese*, so unjustly vilified

vilified by Lord *Anson* †, who only saw them from his ship, and through his prejudices. They should consider every one of their provinces as a foreign country to each other, and their respective commerce as the only commerce which has no bounds, and whose immensity is absolutely secure from all danger. I will not judge of the intentions of the celebrated *Colbert* : I only examine into his talents and capacity; and I dare affirm, that he was only great in regard to scholars and artists, for pretty much the same reason as the ancient Princes, who founded Monasteries, were Saints to the Monks.

M. le Pelletier, who succeeded *Colbert* in the department of the Finances, saw nothing beyond what he had seen. The inhabitants of several provinces wanted, as they want at

† [Rather by Mr. *Walter*, the nominal, or Mr. *Robins*, the real author of the account of his Lordship's voyage. As to the remark, it is undoubtedly just, and cannot be too often repeated. Count *Orlov* would no less traduce the *English*, and deceive the *Russians*, if, in an account of his voyage, published at *Petersburgh*, he should stigmatise our whole nation for what he might see and hear of the colliers of *Newcastle*, or of the cormorants of *Deal*. And it is hoped and presumed, that Mr. *Chitqua*, the ingenious modeller now in *London*, will not, at his return to *Canton*, (if the superstition of our sailors will suffer him to return) represent us all as savages for the harsh treatment he received on board one of our *East Indiamen*.]

present,

present; the necessaries of life; while those of many others abounded in superfluities. A true Minister would have apprehended, that the correcting that inequality of circumstances, which the inequality of soil makes between the various people who compose the Kingdom of *France* was a work highly worthy of the King his master, and of his own application. He would have redressed that partiality of nature, by opening some channels of internal circulation. He would have made all the members of the nation partake of the healthy state of some, and would have happily proved to all the people of *France*, that they are children of the same family, and are all equally dear to the common father.

THE wars, in which *Lewis XIV* involved himself from 1688 to 1714, reduced the science of the Ministers who succeeded *Colbert* to the fertility of expedients. They only offer to the observer more or less of the talent of those financiers of the King, to impoverish the people and to exhaust the Kingdom. *M. Desmarests*, who acted in the last years of that terrible crisis, deserved, by that spirit of resource, the indulgence of the Public, and he ventured to claim its acknowledgments. In the Memoir which he presented to the Duke-Regent, he affirmed that from 1708 to 1715 he had added only eight or nine millions of
livres

livres in notes to those that were current. This was like an advocate who offered his cause in the most favourable light. He was not obliged to say that he sunk the credit of the old notes, before he called them in; and that he substituted others in the room of them to the amount of their original value. He was, in like manner, silent as to his creating some extraordinary actions for fourteen hundred millions; and as to his carrying to its height the influence of the Farmers and the credit of the King. During the first thirty years which ensued after the death of M. Colbert, the Excisemen and Farmers gained from the State and the people about two thousand one hundred and fifty millions. The Royal credit was so sunk in 1715, that *Lewis XIV* gave twenty-eight millions of his best notes and bills, in order to receive eight in real effects. I reserve my third æra for the next post. Your Lordship will see, whether the *French* finances are so improved within the last fifty years, that the Monarchy can compare with *Great Britain* on the ancient proportion of three to one.

I am, &c.

LET-

LETTER XXVI,

TO THE SAME.

The same subject continued. Very uncertain estimate of the present debt of France. The system of paper, under the Regency, threw all into confusion in France, and came to nothing in a few months. It has enriched and supported England for above fifty years. Reason of this difference. Examination of Cardinal de Fleury. Mistake in the Testament of Alberoni remarked and corrected. That oeconomy is very different from parsimony. Suppression of the establishment of Prime Minister, by Cardinal Fleury, improper. That the expence of the Court is of importance to the welfare of the people. Story of Lewis XI's Scullion. The President Henault censured for his opinion of Cardinal de Richelieu. An oeconomical administration is admirably well suited to France, and is sufficient to enrich her. Parsimony cannot but be prejudicial to her.

MY LORD,

THE present debt of *France* is reckoned at about two thousand millions of livres,
or.

or a hundred millions of pounds sterling; and the Kingdom is augmented by † *Lorrain*, whose revenue, extended in the first years to sixteen millions by too greedy an Intendant, may be constantly eight, without oppressing the province. Your Lordship knows the clamours and lamentations which this debt excites, ever since the great Assemblies have thought proper to reflect upon it. It is, however, one third less than that which *Lewis XIV* left at his death ‡. The latter was left to the care of Government, as an object which was exclusively in its district; and the Duke-Regent was not importuned with remonstrances and projects concerning the time and manner of discharging it. That Prince was so bold as to place to the account of the State-

† [“ The Dutchy of *Lorrain* and *Bar* was yielded to the late King *Stanislaus*, by the peace of 1733, with a reversion to the Crown of *France* after his death, for some ready money, and a pension of three million five hundred thousand livres to Duke *Francis* (afterwards Emperor) till such time as *Tuscany* should devolve to him. Thus was *Lorrain* re-united to the Crown; a re-union which had often been attempted in vain.” *Age of Lewis XV. Chap. 4.*]

‡ [“ *Lewis XIV* left, at his death, a debt of two thousand six hundred millions, at twenty-eight livres to the mark, according to the value of the coin at that time, which makes about four thousand five hundred millions of our money, as the coin stood in 1750.” *Age of Lewis XIV, Chap. 28.*]

creditors

creditors, and in deduction of their capital, the usury which they had exacted and received. But this operation, which perhaps would have reduced the debt to less than one half, required that the repayment of the debt, acknowledged as real, should be ascertained; and the emptiness of the coffers captivating the imagination of the gentlemen of the Council, no one seemed to have an idea of that fund of redemption which escaped *Colbert*, and is still unknown at present. After many movements, which had only an agitation without use, the Duke had scarce any other part to take but that of declaring a bankruptcy, when the *Scotchman Law* presented to him his system.

THIS famous man duped *France*, and did not deceive the Duke-Regent, who did not pretend to make use of him but only to free the State from her debts, at whose expence his hook was baited. This system, so decried, is exactly the same that we have adopted for about fifty years, and to which we are indebted for our greatness. The different genius of the two people, and the different situation of the two States, afford a sufficient reason for the difference in the progress of the operations, and in the continuance of the system itself. In both nations, credit has been carried far beyond their resources and securities. But with
us,

us, it is stretched with gentleness, and consequently with order, and in *France* its increase was in no proportion to the time. Paper, with us, has no variations; or if there are some, they are periodical, momentary, and imperceptible. We know how to preserve its original value, and to keep it on a par with money. That is not without great inconveniences, but we have avoided the greatest, which is to give a wound to confidence. With the *French*, *Law's* notes were raised, in a few months, to an immense price above that which was at first assigned them. At their greatest rise they were as sixty to one. The fall was inevitable. The vivacity of the *French*, and their situation on a continent, where they have constant and necessary connections with foreigners, made them quickly discover the insufficiency of the resources and securities; and to hasten the catastrophe, there came a cargo of counterfeit notes. In our island, foreigners cannot overturn the establishment of our paper-money, for our internal commerce. Accustomed to consider the nation as a permanent and independent body, we have the more readily accepted it as a caution, as we have no clear idea of the security and of the abilities of the surety. In *France*, on the contrary, the King and the State are known; they are already known to be insolvent,

vent, and whatever may be the patriotism in a Monarchy, it is always subordinate to private interest. *Law* carried on a cheat, but he did not carry it on long, by the funds which he assigned as a mortgage. Every *Frenchman* understood that it was an imaginary fund, and that the King's creditors would not dis-train his Majesty in order to compel him to payment. The bill-holders, recovered from their first confusion, demanded back their money. The bank, soon exhausted, shut up its shops: neither the banker, nor the creditor of the bank, reclaimed the mortgage, or had recourse to the security. To give some solidity to the system of the *Scotchman*, he ought to have reduced the *French* to the state to which *Joseph* reduced the *Egyptians*, and to have subjected the King, who would then have been proprietor of all the estates in his Kingdom, to arrêts of distress, judgment, and sale, in favour of the owners of his bills.

It is generally believed, that, notwithstanding the great dissipation which the war had caused, there were in *France*, at the time of the system, about a thousand millions in circulation, at fifty livres to the mark †. The

† [“ The current coin of the Kingdom, in 1683, might amount to about five hundred millions: at present, it may be about twelve hundred millions, according to the

paper stirred and removed almost all that cash, and added to it about four thousand millions of its own money†. The fall of the system having been precipitated, the Duke-Regent did not draw from it all the advantage which he had promised himself for the annihilation of the debts of the State. The King, however, was freed from the most burthenome creditors; and he would, besides, have gained five or six hundred millions, if foreigners could have been prevented from realising before the *French*. The last edicts in favour of the bank having obliged prudent individuals to conceal their money, it was scarce possible to set a just value on the subtraction which resulted from the system in the mass of circulation. According to the very probable opinion of those who allow nearly the same proportion to the foreigners who realised at the height of the crisis, and to those who made the first sale of counterfeit

the standard valuation of money, But the computation of our time is almost double what it was in the time of Colbert." *Age of Lewis XIV, Chap. 28.*]

† ["Law himself, deceived by his own scheme, and intoxicated with the public folly as well as his own, had fabricated so many notes, that the chimerical value of the funds, in 1719, exceeded fourscore times the real value of the current coin of the Kingdom." *Age of Lewis XV, Chap. 2.*]

notes

notes in *Holland*, the loss of the Kingdom may be reckoned at about a fourth part of its specie.

THE Duke-Regent did not live long enough to regain the public confidence ; and he had too little application to give himself up, as he ought, to the important particulars of oeconomy, which became the only remedy for the evil. The Duke of *Bourbon*, who, after him, assumed the reins of Government under the young King, had the misfortune to unite with the inexperience in which *Lewis XIV* had educated the Princes of the blood royal, an unbounded complaisance towards the persons to whom he gave some ascendant over him ; and these persons were very far from being able and affectionate. He was succeeded by *Cardinal de Fleury*, a man of a pacific disposition, and of a resolute turn of mind for the management of minute particulars. He is drawn with a bold, but very incorrect, pencil in the *Political Testament of Alberoni* †. Every one agrees with the author of that false Testament, that “ there is a political body as

† [“ A work,” says M. *Beaumelle*, “ much criticised by M. de *Voltaire*, and much esteemed in spite of him. “ It was written by M. *Maubert*, who was also the ingenious, bold, but faithless author of the *Political History of Lewis XIV.*” See *Memoirs of Mad. de Maintenon*, Book III. Chap. 1.]

“well as a natural body, in which a great
“loss of substance can only be repaired by
“regimen.” Immense sums, which the war
had carried into *Spain, Italy, and Germany,*
had been sent out of *France.* The annihilation
of the Marine had reduced into a very
narrow compass the share of the *French* in
the wealth which annually comes from *America*
into *Europe.* Commerce was weakened, lux-
ury and ostentation had overflowed all ranks,
the taxes had still increased. The consump-
tion was real ; there is no quibbling against
facts. But it does not follow, that Cardinal
Fleury could not restore to *France* her health,
without opening some foreign sources which
might give her as much as she had lost, or by
enlarging the channels by which the gold and
silver, which had been dispersed, might re-
turn. Very far from reproaching this Mini-
ster for not fixing all his views on the internal
administration, and for not seeking, except by
oeconomy, the methods to enrich the King,
the State, and the people, he would be loaded
with the justest encomiums, if the honour
could be ascribed to him of such a plan. The
restoration of the Royal Marine was imprac-
ticable, and splendid enterprises in favour of
commerce at large would have been heroic
follicies, resembling that of *Alberoni*, when he
ventured to place *Spain,* weakened and ex-
hausted,

hausted, in a situation to have the Emperor, *France* and *Great Britain* to encounter at the same time*. The fall of the *Mississippi* Company had discouraged the *French* from venturing all in one bottom; and they would have rejected the most flattering hopes, if they could not have been realised but by advancing the first funds. When affairs are in the ordinary course, a man of genius is very capable of giving birth to circumstances. Otherwise, he is obliged to bend and accommodate himself to them. It was no small matter to recover all the Orders of the State from the confusion occasioned by the system. The *East India* establishment, to which cowardice, ignorance, and our good fortune have given, in this war, so great a shock, may be considered as the work of Cardinal *Fleury*. It was raised, during his Ministry, to an incredible height of power and opulence. The recall of *M. Dupleix*, and the choice of the ignorant persons who succeeded that ingenious and able Governor, cannot be imputed to his

* [In the war of 1718, when *Alberoni* laid schemes for deposing the Duke of *Orleans* from the Regency of *France*, for invading *Great Britain* by the Pretender, and for dividing the power of the Empire by means of the *Czar* and the King of *Sweden*, whom he also engaged in the project of invading *Great Britain*. But in 1721, the King of *Spain* was obliged to accede to the quadruple alliance, and to dismiss his ambitious Minister.]

Eminence.

Eminence. But neither the aggrandisement of *Pondicherry*, nor the acquisition of *Lorraine*, for which *Lewis XIII* and *Lewis XIV* had wished in vain, prevent Cardinal *Fleury* from being blended in the crowd of Ministers below the middle rank; because he was acquainted with parsimony, and had no idea of oeconomy. The oeconomy of a Statesman is nothing more than the art of comprehending the particulars of internal administration, the art of discovering and of making an advantage of domestic riches and resources. Parsimony is the reverse of this wise oeconomy. It strangles, it stifles, as it were, the powerful State where it is adopted by the Sovereign. Cardinal *Fleury*, the depositary of all the regal authority, suffered the Marine absolutely to sink, discouraged the Nobility and Merchants, and increased the misery of the people. Such consequences cannot possibly result from oeconomy. Endowed with this virtue of a Statesman, he would have put a stop to the raising the rural Militia, which depopulated the country already in want of men, and made the peasants flock into the towns, which overflowed with the dregs of the people. I should deprive your Lordship of the satisfaction of speculating on political oeconomy, if I were to give you more at large what it recommended to the

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Prime

Prime Minister of *France*, and what he did directly contrary to its maxims. I will only say, with the *Testator of Alberoni*, that the
 ‘ corrected some abuses; that he provided
 ‘ against some inconveniences; and that, by
 ‘ an extraordinary attention to very little
 ‘ things, he procured some considerable
 ‘ gains for the coffers of the Treasury; but
 ‘ that, by descending to these minute objects,
 ‘ he failed to apprehend those which were of
 ‘ much greater importance; and that he did
 ‘ nothing for the welfare of the Nation, no-
 ‘ thing for the advantage of the State.’ Fi-
 gure to yourself an old woman, who rocks
 an infant tormented with want of sleep.

CARDINAL *Fleury* suppressed the establishment of Prime Minister, though he reserved the title, rank, and authority. This means, my Lord, that he erased from the registers the pensions and appointments annexed to that first dignity. You see there only the appearance and shadow of parsimony, void of all reality; as his Eminence had it in his power to draw at his discretion out of the King’s coffers, and to regulate his expences as he thought proper, without regard to what was allowed him by his Majesty. This refinement of little popular policy might, perhaps, with us, in some degree avail a Favourite, who should be exposed to the cen-
 sure

sure and dislike of the *English* people. But in a Kingdom so purely monarchical as *France*, where, besides, the expence of the Prince, and of those who are peculiarly attached to his service, is a channel of communication absolutely necessary between him and his people; where pride and luxury, well understood, even in the extreme to which the dignity of the Crown and the delusion of appearance may carry them, are encouragements to internal commerce, the parsimony of Cardinal *Fleury*, supposing it somewhat real, only raised obstructions.

THE boy, whom *Lewis XI* met in his kitchen, thought, in that respect, as justly as the most able politician. "How much do you earn," he was asked by the Monarch, whom he did not know? "As much as the King," he bluntly answered: "I earn my expences, and the King does not earn more than his." The Duke of *Sully* urged the King his master to hoard up riches, only with a well-laid design of lessening the taxes, in proportion to what his savings would keep out of circulation. A *French* Historian †, better acquainted with

† The President *Henault*, on the reign of *Lewis XIII*.
 ["To him," says *Voltaire*, "we are indebted for one
 of the shortest and best chronological histories of
France, and perhaps for the only method in which all

law than with politics, says of Cardinal *de Richelieu*, that 'the State gained, at his death, four millions, which he annually expended for the support of his household; but that it lost a great Minister.' With the President *Henault's* leave, that is no compensation. The State is the nation; and the four millions which were not spent on *Flanders* laces, on *Russian* furs, on the porcelain of *Saxony* and *Japan*, on *English* iron-ware, on *Italian* curiosities, were scattered through the nation. The only reality was the loss which she suffered of a great man.

THE most flourishing part of the reign of *Lewis XIV* was that in which his Court was the most brilliant, and his manner of living the most expensive. The pride, magnificence, and luxury of the Monarch were no farther prejudicial, than as their contagion passed from the Courtiers to every rank; which multiplied the number and the species of the wants of each individual, in all the classes of the people. When *Lewis*

"great histories should now be written; for the multiplicity of facts and writings is become so great, that they must all necessarily soon be reduced to extracts and dictionaries. But it will be difficult to imitate the author of the *Chronological Abridgment*, by going to the bottom of so many things, and yet seeming only to touch upon them slightly."]

XIV had received from the Marchioness *de Maintenon* a relish for retirement, he was reduced to large loans, and to great straits. I do not say, that, by continuing on the footing of his first twenty years, he would have avoided that usual period of magnificent Princes. But I have reason to think, that he would have reached it much later, and that he would have been led to it with much less harshness. The burgher-like life of the Monarch threw the Capital into a lethargy, which communicated itself to the most distant Provinces, one after another. Purfes were shut, because the King's coffers, like the lion's den, shewed only the footsteps of entrance. When the Dauphin, son of *Lewis XIV*, drew † his

† It is somewhere said, that, one day, the Prince of *Conti* having lost a thousand pistoles at play, on credit, desired the Dauphin, son of *Lewis XIV*, to lend them to him, and that the presumptive heir of the Crown having asked *M. Colbert* for that sum, the Minister replied, that, "he could not give it to his Royal Highness, before he had mentioned it to the King;" that the *Marquess de Louvois*, soon informed of the fact, immediately carried two thousand pistoles to the Dauphin, begging his Highness to do him the honour, for the future, of preferring him to the rest of the King's Ministers for such trifles; that the King did not approve *Colbert's* refusal, and desired that the Prince's draughts might henceforth be received at the Royal Treasury as his own. [This Prince, the only son of *Lewis XIV*, was swept off by the small pox in 1711, in the 50th year of his age, and was lamented by the people as the

bills on the Royal Treasury, *France* was richer than at the time when the sons of *France*, the uncles and father of *Lewis XV*, were confined to † thirty louis d'ors a week, or month, for their privy purse.

THERE IS NO State in *Europe* where an economical administration is more necessary, and promises greater success, than in *France*. Cardinal *de Fleury*, who had sometimes the happiness to hit upon it by chance, did enough to stop the State, which was advancing very fast towards her ruin. In 1738 the Kingdom was in that pleasing langour in which a great Statesman and Financier would wish it to be, in order for him to undertake the greatest operations. The Mercantile Marine flourished of itself, and was capable of cherishing the regal Marine till it was able to provide for its own support. But the latter was absolutely annihilated; and with a war with *Great Britain* in view, it seemed as if they would restore it no farther than that we might be

best son, the best father, and the most amiable and promising Prince of his country. His son, the Duke of *Burgundy*, and his grandson, the Duke of *Bretagne*, both dying in 1712, the title of *Dauphin* came to his youngest grandson, the Duke of *Anjou*, an infant, now *Lewis XV*.]

† Both these facts are to be found, I think in the Letters of *Madam du Noyer*. The authority, is very doubtful.

able

able to destroy it without any great effort. The war of *Bohemia* might be styled the foretaste and pattern of that of *Hesse* and *Hanover*: your Lordship will examine whether the latter was conducted better than the other; and whether the Parliaments draw a just conclusion, when they impute the disorder of the Finances entirely to dissipation.

I am, &c.



LETTER XXVII.

TO THE BISHOP OF R.

The Jesuits abandoned. Large secret pensions paid in Europe by the General of the Society, The Archbishop of Paris is their declared patron, and why. Curious particulars of the genius, character, and fortune of that Prelate. His fate foretold.

MY LORD,

YOUR Lordship need not doubt, that it is all over with the *Jesuits* in *France*, as well as with the * *Templars*. Only, their spoils will be more honourably divided; I mean their seizable spoils; for the prudent General, it is said, has had the address to transfer all the cash to *Rome*. The late Society of *Jesus* has no more defenders but some half-starved priests, who are privately patronised

* [“ In this enlightened and moderate age, it happened to the *Jesuits* as it befell the *Templars* in a time of ignorance and barbarism; but the *Jesuits* were treated, in their disgrace, with mildness, and the *Templars* with cruelty.” *Age of Lewis XV, Ch. 38.* See Vol. I. p. 166—9.]

by

by some weak Prelates, at whose expence the Archbishop of *Paris* flatters himself with gaining a Cardinal's hat. Your Lordship will be still more surpris'd at this general abandoning, when you know that Cardinal * *Passionei*, all his life a declared enemy of the *Jesuits*, undertook to prove, from authentic documents, that the Most Reverend General pays in *Europe* a million of pounds sterling in private pensions.

I AM not yet enabled to give you the informations, which you desire, of the genius and character of the turbulent Archbishop of the Capital. The people call him pious, good men think him devout, cavillers pretend that he makes shift with any thing that serves his present turn. They assert, that, as an *Ame-*

* [*Cardinal Passionei* was Secretary of the briefs, and Librarian of the *Vatican*. He had one of the most valuable libraries in *Rome*, of which he did the honours in a manner the most satisfactory to the learned. He had a most cordial hatred for the *Jesuits*, to which those Fathers were no strangers, and that, if it had depended on him, their Society would have been soon dissolved. Accordingly a few days after his death (which happened in 1761) an epitaph was handed about at *Rome*, which shews as well the sentiments of its author, as of him for whom it was intended :

Dominico Passioneio

S. R. E. Cardinali Presbytero

Societas Jesu Superstes

P."

Anecdotes of Rome, &c. By a Swedish Traveller.]

rican Savage, when a musket and hanger are put into his hands, leaves off his bow and his helmet, he would soon lay aside the appendages of devotion, which are now only the amusement of Monks and Fools, if he attained a post which would exhibit him to all *Europe*: if he extends his views to that, without having such a metamorphosis in reserve, he hangs out the colours of the ridiculous Bishop of *Beauvais*, whom the Queen, mother of *Lewis XIV*, was tempted to make her Prime Minister, and who, for his first political operation, gave notice to the *Dutch*, that "his Majesty would renounce their alliance, if they would not speedily be reconciled to the communion of *Rome* *." Can your Lord-

* ["It is said, in some of the *Memoirs* of that time, that the Queen reposed her confidence in *Maxarin* only for want of *Potier*, Bishop of *Beauvais*, whom at first she had chosen for her Minister. This Bishop is described as a man of no capacity : this indeed is probable, and that he was employed for some time by the Queen as a cypher, not to exasperate the nation by an immediate choice of a second Cardinal, who was a foreigner. But we cannot believe, that *Potier* began his short Ministry by declaring to the *Dutch*, that if they desired to continue in alliance with France, they must become Catholics. He might as well have made the same declaration to the *Swedes*. Almost all our historians relate this absurdity, because they have read it in the *Memoirs* of some of the Courtiers, and in those of the *Frondeurs*. These *Memoirs* contain but too many facts, which are either misrepresented by prejudice, or founded only on popular

ship believe, that the Archbishop of *Paris* refused to be cured by the celebrated *Tronchin* of *Geneva*, because the Doctor is of the Reformed communion? This, I have been assured, is a fact. I know, that, in his capacity of Administrator-General of the Hospitals, he caused a discovery, very useful to those public foundations, to be rejected, and gave as a reason, that "the person who offered it had withdrawn himself from the "Monastic life." This zeal, perhaps, may be real; it may also be grimace. Be it what it will, if he directs his steps to the Ministry, he has strangely encumbered the road which he has yet to take in order to arrive at it. Though he is reckoned extremely disinterested, though abundant alms widely diffuse the proofs of his charity, he is not, however, beloved by the people, who seldom fail to be captivated by that virtue. This does no honour to his prudence; and he must have been very unfortunately mistaken in the form. I think that the Prelate is chiefly deficient in suppleness, a talent much recommended to the turbulent by his predecessor Cardinal *de Retz*. He has, on the other hand, great courage; and he will support heroically the

popular reports. What is puerile should not be mentioned, and what is absurd cannot be believed." *Age of Lewis XIV, Ch. 3.*

troubles.

troubles in which his firmness may involve him. What he pursues he pursues strongly. Call that obstinacy, if you please.

His morals are spotless. But he has not escaped calumny on that head, and he has the misfortune of which good men do not complain. It is, in great measure, his own fault; as, being once prejudiced against his inferiors, he never loses the impression which he has received. He has not been able to conceal his having indulged the ambition of usurping the Primacy among the *French* Clergy, of whom he is the lowest Archbishop; which has lost him the favour of the Primates, and has estranged from him most of the Bishops, jealous also of the many advantages given him by his place of residence, and which they have not in theirs. He has acted a courageous part, by cantoning himself in his diocese, with a resolution of filling the employments of his Church with such men only as are at his devotion. He receives consolation from them, and from himself, for the continual mortifications which the Parliament makes him suffer. He is known to have three patrons, who deign to style themselves his friends. The Pope is reckoned the first, and the General of the *Jesuits* the third.

THIS Prelate, all on fire for the observation of the holy canons, and the maintenance of good

good Ecclesiastical discipline, has twice exchanged an inferior Prelacy for one more large and more wealthy. From being Bishop of *Bayonne* he became Archbishop of *Narbonne*; and from *Narbonne* he removed to *Paris*. The Archbishoprick would be to an *Englishman* about ten thousand pounds sterling a year. To a *Frenchman* its income is above two hundred thousand livres; and it is, besides, the daintiest morsel in the *Gallican* Church. This Prelate takes place among the Dukes, and he is the fourth of the Ecclesiastical Peers. Whether the pious *Christopher de Beaumont* has some Abbeyes in *commendam*, I know not. He may justly be reckoned one of those favourites of Fortune, on whom honours and riches devolve in their sleep. He is of a very noble family, though it is said to have been far from rich, and of no consequence at Court. It scarce supplied him with a sufficiency to defray the expences of his studies, which he pursued at *Paris*. He lodged on the third story, in *Masons-street*, in the quarter of the *Sorbonne*, at a perriwig-maker's, who was obliged, more than once, to warn the apprentice-Doctor, his lodger, of the expiration of a month's lodging and board.

His life was so good, or his conduct so prudent, that none of those youthful sallies, into which the Abbés of rank are so frequently

ly

ly betrayed, were discovered in him. He cultivated an acquaintance with the Superior of the seminary of *St. Sulpice*; he made his court to the King's Reverend Confessor; he professed himself thoroughly devoted to the powerful Society of *Jesus*. No patron, however, entered his name, in large letters, on the list of benefices. No Abbey fell to his lot, nor even the smallest Priory, to draw him down from his third story. At length, his hour came at the moment in which he least expected it. One lucky morning, he was told that he must remove from the perriwig-maker's house into the Episcopal Palace of *Bayonne*. He went, apostolically, to the place of his destination, and in like manner he fulfilled it. He lived in his diocese generally esteemed, honoured, and beloved, at the time of the first marriage of the Dauphin of *France*.

Some ill-disposed persons had reminded the * Infanta of the breach of contract with her † sister by *Lewis XV*, and they added, that

* [*Maria Theresa*, second daughter of *Philip V*. She was married to the (late) Dauphin in 1745, and died in child-bed in 1746, a few days after her father.]

† [The Infanta *Maria*, whom the King sent back to *Madrid* in 1724, as she was but seven years of age, and the nation wished to see him married to a Princess by whom he might have issue. Accordingly he married the daughter of King *Stanislaus*.]

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the *French* unwillingly received a *Spanish* Dauphiness. At this the Infanta was highly chagrined: she was a Princess of the greatest rectitude of mind, and had an excellent heart; she advanced towards *Paris* like a victim towards the place of sacrifice: she advanced towards the Prince her husband with the melancholy ideas, which the certainty, which she thought she had, of his rendering her miserable, could not but give her. It is not known whether the Bishop of *Bayonne* had been previously informed of the false impressions given to the Princess in *Spain*, or whether the innate zeal of all the *French* for every thing that concerns their King and his family was his motive in the appointment of some small entertainments, with which the bride of the only son of *Lewis XV* was received in his diocese. Be that as it may, the Princess found on her road, as far as *Bayonne*, some companies of young peasants of both sexes genteely dressed, who welcomed her with the demonstrations of that artless joy which bears the stamp of sentiment. This they displayed by dancing continually before and round her carriage, to the music of a tabor and flutes. The vivacity of all these young people was observed by the sorrowful Princess. But she did not yet venture to believe the report of her eyes, and her imagination

concur-

concurring with the goodness of her heart to exculpate from the most criminal imposture the wretches who had imposed on her, she imagined that perhaps they had meant to speak to her of the Court, and not of the people. Her situation was too painful: she could not suppress all her uneasiness; and finding, in the Bishop, a man to whom she thought she might open her heart, she imposed in him the important confidence of her fears. This Prelate has an excellent physiognomy, and is no less happy as a speaker: on so important an occasion as this, he could not but be the most eloquent and persuasive of all men. The Dauphiness expanded her heart to the most pleasing hopes, and was delivered from her anxieties. She eagerly proceeded towards her husband, to whom she presented herself in that disposition of heart and mind, which was capable of bringing into the conjugal union such a proportion as was necessary to make her happy. Finding every thing at Court just as the Bishop had promised her, she ascribed part of her happiness to him, and communicated to the Prince her husband the just esteem which she had for the Prelate.

BEHOLD, my Lord, a path to favour, in the highest degree certain, speedy, innocent, and glorious! I can conceive none, on which an Ecclesiastic could pride himself with more reason.

What

What advances would M. de Beaumont have made towards the first dignity in the Kingdom, if he had always been studious to appear in this respectable light of a friend to his Prince, and of a *Frenchman* equally zealous and intelligent! He is now considered by the Parliaments of the Kingdom as a firebrand, and by the indulgent public as a blind fanatic. The friends of peace, who tell his fortune, foresee him growing old in the Embassy of *Rome* under a Cardinal's hat. The rest bring him to the bar before the Parliament of Peers, for some sedition which he will indiscreetly occasion. As to his person, I have studied it by the rules of Dr. *Stavistock*. He is very handsome, and would be taken for the meekest of mortals, if the meekness of his features, of his voice, his gesture, and his gait, was not sullied by an artful demeanour, which affords great matter of speculation to connoisseurs. He battles from the bottom of his Oratory for his dear *Jesuits*. If he should take the field for them, he will receive some severe blows; for the Parliament owes them to him on many accounts; and, in all appearance, those gentlemen will prove the strongest.

Your Lordship has here all that I have collected concerning a man who has made much noise with little reputation †. Receive

† [On reviewing the conduct and character of this
Prelate

it, my Lord, with the small acknowledgment due to the desire which I have of finding greater opportunities of giving you pleasure.

Prelate, as drawn by our Author and other modern writers, we think, we can trace, in many instances, a remarkable similitude between Archbishop *Beaumont*, now so famous in *France*, and Archbishop *Becket*, once so renowned in *England*. They both pursued their studies at *Paris*: "the person of *Becket*," says Lord *Lyttelton*, "was graceful, and his countenance pleasing, his eloquence flowing and sweet." "*M. de Beaumont*," says our Author, "is very handsome, has an excellent physiognomy, and is no less happy as a speaker." The *Englishman* was "constantly temperate and invincibly chaste." The *Frenchman* has been equally free from the guilt or suspicion of youthful frailties. But in their ruling passion, the distinguishing feature of both these characters, most striking is the parallel, each of these true sons of *Rome* turbulently opposing the jurisdiction of the Church to the Civil power, and strenuously screening criminal Ecclesiastics from the secular judicature. In particular, *Becket* excommunicated several Bishops, and other principal persons, for adhering to the Constitutions of *Clarendon*, and annulled the Act of Parliament which confirmed them: Archbishop *Beaumont* ordered the sacraments to be refused to all who would not receive the Constitution *Unigenitus*, dissolved a community of Nuns for their disobedience, and excommunicated all who read the decrees and remonstrances of the Parliament on the subject. Both these Prelates were banished; the one, voluntarily, from *England*, to elude the sentence of the Council of *Northampton*; the other by the King, first to *Constance*, and afterwards to a greater distance: By virtue of this sentence, the effects of the *English* Primate were decreed to be at

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I have heard nothing of our Christian *Jesuit*. I have written concerning him to the Marquess of N, from whom I have received no answer. I know not how to account for the silence of

the King's mercy. The temporalities of the *French* Metropolitan were, in like manner, seized by the Parliament. *Becket* was Prime Minister to *Henry II*, Legate of the Holy See, Chancellor and Primate of *England*: *M. de Beaumont's* views terminate, we are told, in the Primacy of *France* and Embassy to *Rome*. To these dignities a Cardinal's hat may, perhaps, be added. Our Metropolitan, indeed, had not that honour; but then he had an honour far superior, the crown of martyrdom and canonization: and from assassination the modern *Becket* has narrowly escaped, as the blow, which *Damiens* aimed at the King, was, in some measure, intended for him, "the complaints against the Archbishop having," as *Voltaire* says, "turned the criminal's brain," and excited him, as he confessed, to that "vile attempt." Nothing, in short, is wanting to complete the parallel, but such a stroke; as *Paris*, it is probable, by the Pope's assistance, would then boast a *St. Christopher*, as well as *Canterbury* a *St. Thomas*. On the whole, Christian candour and charity will incline us to say of both, in the words of the excellent Historian of *Henry II*, that "whatever may have been their motives (which can be certainly judged of by Him alone, to whom all hearts are open,) whether ambition and arrogance, vain glory or prejudice, mistaken zeal or real enthusiasm, they have certainly shewn such a spirit as constitutes heroism, when it exerts itself in a cause beneficial to mankind: and had they defended the established laws of their country, and the fundamental rules of civil justice, with as much zeal and intrepidity as they opposed them, they would have de-

served

that gentleman, as I cannot doubt either his politeness or his benevolence.

I am, &c.

"served to be ranked with those great men, whose virtues make one easily forget the alloy of some natural imperfections."]



LET.

LETTER XXVIII.

TO THE SAME.

Notice of the Preliminaries of Peace. Letter from the Ex-Jesuit to a French Bishop. Claim of the Ex-Jesuits to the effects which they brought into the Society of Jesus, when they engaged in it. How this re-imbursement may be obtained. To what M le Franc confines himself in this respect. That in his present hatred of the Institute, to which he was devoted, there is neither inconstancy nor contradiction. That he hates it sincerely, and loved it as sincerely. That it was morally impossible for him not to enter into the Order with ardour. What is the mode of seduction with a religious Novice. How the Catholic Doctors establish absurdities on texts of Scripture. Institute of the Theatines still less reasonable than that of the Jesuits. Other instances. That the great religious Orders established in France give the Parliaments still more advantage over them than the Jesuits. That even the Order of St. Benedict has need of their indulgence. M. le Franc's dissatisfaction with his situation. How he surmounted it. How the young Monks in the same case are confirmed in their

their prejudices, or kept within their cloister. Contradiction of the laws with regard to them. How they rivetted the chains of the Jesuits. M. le Franc's destination to the foreign Missions. What was then the disposition of his mind. What were the instructions which he received from his masters. The Ex-Jesuit's very favourable opinion of the Bishops in France. Remarkable project of a Gallican Commentary on the Holy Scripture. That the laws and the Regal authority led all the French into an error on the Institute of the Jesuits. That the favour, granted by the law, of revoking their vows within five years, is without reality. Proposals for another law made in the Assemblies of the Clergy. How incapable a young man is of binding himself by the three vows. A Monk compared to a prisoner, whose acts are not more valid in the twentieth than in the first year of his confinement.

MY LORD,

I HAVE only time, before the departure of the messenger, to close this packet which I have received from my friend, whose silence was occasioned by a journey into the country. You will find there some news of your *Jesuit*. I wish they may satisfy your curiosity. The Preliminaries of the Peace are settled;

settled; perhaps, at this present writing, they are receiving the signature of the two Ministers. Long live Liberty, High Church, and Peace! Long live GEORGE III! Long live all good *Englishmen*!

I am, &c.

“ L E T T E R

“ FROM M. LE FRANC, AN EX-JESUIT,
TO A FRENCH BISHOP.

“ MY LORD,

“ HAVING taken the oath dictated and prescribed by the Arrêt, I think myself restored to all the rights of a subject of his Majesty, and admitted to enjoy, with all good *Frenchmen*, the advantages which genius and labour can procure in civil society. I have abjured the *Jesuits*, their doctrine, and their morals, so sincerely, that I have no idea left of returning to them. I have so publicly broken the bonds which united me to that proscribed Congregation, that the Chief himself, omnipotent as he is, could not prevail with his subjects to pardon me. The laws which allowed me to give myself up to the Society of *Jesús*, authorised it to appropriate to itself the fortune of which I could dispose: It seems to me, that
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the same laws which at present annul my contract, ought to restore me my money, or to procure me an equivalent for it. Nothing can be more just, than that the creditors created by Father *de la Valette* should come upon the effects of the Society ||: It was allowed by their agent, and Father *de Sacy*, their Attorney-general in *France*, by disposing of their masses with that view, has confessed, that the Most Reverend General ought to open his coffers to their demands. But I have some claims on that rich community, as well founded as those of the Sieur *Lionçi* and his partners; and I should have reason and equity on my side, if I was allowed to make the best of them in a regular court of justice.

“THERE may be a sufficiency to discharge the engagements contracted by Father *de la Valette*, in the effects which the Society has ac-

|| [*“La Valette, a Jesuit, chief of the Missionaries in Guadeloupe, and the greatest merchant in the island, became a bankrupt for upwards of three millions. Every one who was interested, complained to the Parliament of Paris: They now thought they had discovered, that the General of the Order, resident at Rome, had managed the wealth of the Society in a despotic manner; and the Parliament decreed, that the President, and the whole Society of Jesuits, should discharge the debt of la Valette.”*

Age of Lewis XV, Ch. 38.]

quired

quired by the same means as those which have occasioned the debts of that agent. Let the Parliaments demand of the Presidents of the Houses of the College the use which they have made of the money obtained by industry, of the annual profits arising from board and boarders: Let the sums, unquestionably sent to *Rome* into the coffers of the General, be expressed. The savings of the College of *Lewis the Great*, alone, will put an end to the proceedings at law. By undertaking, in like manner, to recover the funds which wealthy novices have consigned, contrary to the promise which was made, of maintaining them during their lives, the Magistrates will clear their severity towards the whole body from the stain which it has of some injustice towards the members. Nothing then will restrain the redemption of Ecclesiastical effects and of pious legacies, which piety does not suffer to be misapplied; and the wretches, who are forced from repose, at an age in which they have not deserved to be deprived of it, will enjoy it, at least, in that degree, which their birth and the labour of their ancestors secure to them.

“ I ASK nothing, my Lord, but justice; yet, I do not extend my claims so far. I agree to pay for my error, however innocent

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it may be, with the loss of my patrimony. Nor do I regret the five and twenty years which I thought I had employed in the service of the Church, and in that of my neighbour; though that was a time which I might have rendered useful to my country, my family, and my fortune, if the Magistrates, who now condemn me to lose the fruits of it, had threatened me with this loss five and twenty years sooner; if they had then required of me a preference for my Prince, my relations, and myself. By absolutely giving up my losses and my damages, as well as my first expence, I intreat indulgence for my simplicity, I beg pardon for having been deceived by Religion, the Church, and the Laws. Your Lordship, I hope, will allow, that this is not asking too much.

“ THE Society of *Jesus* has been honoured, my Lord, with your protection: Of the Parliaments, which at present proscribe it, some have tolerated it, the rest have loved, supported, protected it, for more than two centuries. What else can we infer from this, but that it is now better known than it has been ever since the beginning of its establishment in the Kingdom? Who would be so rash as to make that protection a matter of reproach to your Lordship, or to reproach the Parliaments for that toleration

tion and benevolence? Who would dare, by laying before them their present proceedings, accuse those respectable bodies † of self-contradiction? It would be equally unjust not to ascribe to the new lights, which I have received, the alteration which is made in my way of thinking of the Society of *Jesuit*.

“ I WAS thirty-two years a *Jesuit*. I thought myself in the path of honour and salvation. The veil, which ten generations had consecrated, and behind which I did not even imagine that there could be any thing, has been removed. I have discovered the deception put upon my reason and my conscience. My eagerness to withdraw myself from it proves, that the seduction alone has had an influence on me. The judicious Magistrate § who directed the proceedings of the Parliament of *Rouen*, has perfectly apprehended my situation and that of many of

|| The Parliament of *Toulouse* strenuously defended the *Jesuits* condemned to perpetual banishment by an arrêt of the Parliament of *Paris*, for various attempts on the life of *Henry IV*. It not only preserved in its jurisdiction all who were there, but it also made its province a place of asylum and retreat for the exiles.

§ M. *Charles*, Counsellor, in his Memorial on the Institute, which he had been directed by the Chambers to examine.

my former brethren. See, my Lord, in what terms he has expressed himself concerning it before the assembled Chambers :

“ WHATEVER this Society, against which
 “ we are forced to call in the authority of
 “ the laws, may be, we ought not to dis-
 “ semble, that it has nourished in its bosom,
 “ and there still exist in it, some upright
 “ hearts, some men capable of serving reli-
 “ gion, their Prince, and their country;
 “ some virtuous citizens, some faithful sub-
 “ jects, and some Christians filled with a
 “ sincere attachment to true maxims. Thus,
 “ in blaming the body, it was not our design
 “ to apply the reproaches, which we make
 “ it, to any of its members in particular:
 “ Most of them deserve it the less, as, if
 “ policy, delusion, and prejudice do not
 “ blind them to the mischief of their en-
 “ gagement, they themselves privately soli-
 “ cit the severity of our Ministry, which
 “ the superior views of public good render
 “ indispensable, &c. †

† [The constitution, genius, and progress of this Order, its singular object, peculiar policy, and pernicious effects on civil society, together with its advantages to literature, more especially from the settlements of the *Jesuits* in *Paraguay*, where “ they alone “ have made humanity their object,” and have drawn the natives with the cords of love, have lately been traced

" If the Society of *Jesus* had been attacked, as the Order of Templars was, in such a manner, as to make it be suspected, that jealousy and contrivance had slandered it, in order to oppress it, I think, my Lord, that, with the assistance of Heaven, I should have had firmness enough to sustain the storm at the hazard of my life, and to persist till death in my engagements with it. To detach me from it, nothing less was wanting

traced with a masterly hand by the Historian of *Charles V.*, who justly ascribes the existence of this, as well as the other Monastical Orders, " not to the wisdom of " their founder, but to his enthusiasm." See *Robertson's History of the Emperor Charles V.*, Vol. II. p. 444. —461. See also *M. d'Alémbert sur la destruction des Jésuites.*

It is remarkable, that *Bishop Hall*, so long ago, as the year 1605, when he travelled through the *Spanish Low Countries*, " for knowledge partly, and partly for " health," though he " saw, with wonder, Churches " falling, and *Jesuits* Colleges rising every where— " no city, where those were not either rearing or " built;—yet adds, " Whoever lives long shall see " these men feared of their own, which now hate " them, shall see these seven leane kine devour all " the fat beasts that feed on the meadows of *Tyber.* " " prophetic, as *Pharaoh* dreamed. The event shall " justify my confidence." *Hall's Epist. Decad. I. Epist. 5. p. 281.*

Bayle, after quoting the above passage, says, " This " Prophecy has not yet been accomplished; the power " of the *Jesuits* is indeed very much increased since " that time, &c."

than the evidence produced by the torch of Justice on the inconsistency of its regimen with the first duties of a Christian and a subject. Your Lordship knows, that I might be subject to this regimen, without having it in my power to suspect and to penetrate its secrets. You need not be told, that the knowledge of those secrets is reserved, by the Constitutions themselves, to those who govern. When, therefore, I renounce the Institute of the *Jesuits*, I pay homage to truth, and I follow the impulse of my conscience. When I ask pardon for having remained so long subject to that Institute, concealed, as it was, from most of the Society, it is, in other words, to ask not to be deemed criminal for an involuntary error: It is to acknowledge myself in fault for an error that was inevitable. For the first, I am entitled to the esteem of those to whom probity is dear; for the second, they cannot, without injustice, refuse me compassion.

I ENTERED into the Company of *Jesús* with intentions for which I pray God to judge me. Prepossessed, from my tenderest childhood, in favour of that religious body, I carried thither no other ambition, than that of entering into the road of salvation by that private path which was then esteemed the most fair and the most certain. I saw a kind
of

of heroism in dedicating myself to the service of the Public, at the same time that I renounced its rewards and favours. During the two years of my first Noviciate, I saw nothing, I heard nothing, which did not strengthen my prepossession. That very term of two years, for the first probations, which, at present, may be thought to have been made so long only to render the seduction more complete and more lasting; this term, I say, I figured to myself as a proof of the candour and disinterestedness of the enlistsers. How often have I heard the great Religious Orders reproached for giving one year only of preparation for engagements which must last as long as life? I knew, besides, that the Noviciate is much longer among the † *Carthusians*, for their Brother-Coadjutors, and that the *Benedictines* § prolong it, at pleasure, for their Professed Brothers. The plenitude of obedience, to which the *Jesuit* devotes himself, gave me no idea but that of consolation. That de-

|| [A religious Order, founded by St. Bruno, a native of Cologne, and Canon of Rheims, in 1084. He retired to a mountain in Dauphiny, to a place called *Chartreuse*, from thence the Order took its name.]

§ [One of the most ancient and illustrious Orders in the *Romish* Church, founded by St. *Benedict*, on Mount *Cassino*, in the Kingdom of Naples, A. D. 529.]

pendence and submission pleased me, and they continued to please me, even by their excess, of which I did not apprehend the dangerous consequences. I knew that the obedience which admits not of remonstrance nor delay, is recommended by the greatest Saints, universally acknowledged to be such, as the highest of Christian virtues. What idea was more likely to heat a young head struck with mystic notions, and affected with a desire of religious perfection? With what eagerness does the Novice, whose fervour is artfully kindled, cherish the thought of having always in his obedience a safe-guard against sin, and of being able always, without a crime and without remorse, to give himself up to whatever may be required of him? Every thing in the young man is prepared to undergo the strongest trials: the more they oppose his understanding, the more meritorious he thinks his submission by that humility so much extolled to him for its excellence. Some texts of the Old and New Testament artfully offered, cunningly paraphrased, impress on him, as the first duty of a Christian, indifference for his family, the renunciation of himself, and of his own will. *He that hateth not his father, mother, brethren, and sisters, for the love of*

of me †, says our Saviour, *is not worthy to follow me.* Be ye as children §, it is elsewhere recommended: *the Kingdom of Heaven is the inheritance of the humble and poor in spirit* *. The modest reasoner is crushed with the weight of the greatest Doctors of the Church. After having made him consider the Vicar of God on earth under all his attributes almost divine, he is set to read the numerous Acts which are preserved of this privileged successor of the Apostles, Acts by which this Legislator, incapable of erring and retracting, has made an exact and full cession of his authority to the General of the Society of Jesus, in perpetuity: At length he is fixed on these words of JESUS CHRIST to St. Peter: *Whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in Heaven* ||. By degrees the young man adopts the comments, the explanations, the applications of his teachers; and with the utmost sincerity in the world, he ranks among the first truths of religion, principles and consequences the most absurd.

[† Matt. x. 37. The words are not so strong in the original. They are, as in our translation, *He that loveth father, mother, son, or daughter, more than me, is not worthy of me.*]

§ [Eph. v. 1.] [* Matt. v. 3.] [|| Matt. xvi. 19.]

“ Your Lordship knows, that whatever can be deemed most monstrous in civil society, can find enough to support and justify it in the sacred books, and in the allowance of the Church. The most foul and foolish heretics have built their system on this foundation; and the most determined fanatics have drawn their arguments from this source of truth. We should refuse to believe the ancient history of them, if it told us of a sect of Philosophers, convinced of fatality, and so far given up to it, as to abstain from all methods of providing for their sustenance; yet we have, in the midst of us, without being surprised at it, a Congregation of Monks, who make sovereign perfection consist in an unbounded confidence in that particular providence which the Holy Scripture ascribes to the Deity. St. § *Cajetan* has improved on St. † *Francis d'Assise*. The latter, in his *Rule*, condemns his disciples to be troublesome hornets in the midst of laborious bees, and to seek without shame, to beg without reluctance, a subsistence, which they

§ [One of the Founders of the Order of Regulars, called *Theatins*, in 1524. He was canonised by Pope *Clement X.*]

† [Founder of the Order of *Franciscans*, and so named from his being born at *Assise*, a Bishoprick in the Ecclesiastical State, in *Ombria*. He died in 1226.]

would.

would much more easily obtain by labour. St. *Cajetan*, the Founder of the || *Theatins*, forbids them to possess any thing, even in common, under the title of proprietors; and, in consequence, he prohibits them, in his Institute, from soliciting public charity, to which he abandons them: He does not allow them to ask for necessaries, and at the same time makes it criminal to procure them by labour. All that the *Theatins*, urged by the want of meat and drink, and not having wherewith to satisfy it, can do, is to notify to the Public, by the incessant sound of their bell at dinner-time, that they are in danger of perishing by hunger and thirst. They must leave the rest to Providence. Luckily, this foundation was made at the same time as that of St. *Ignatius* †, which has almost stifled

|| [This Order derived its name from the other Founder, *John Peter Caraffa*, then Bishop of *Theati*, or *Chieti*, in the Kingdom of *Naples*, and afterwards Pope, by the name of *Paul IV.* They resolved rigorously to imitate the clerical life of the Apostles, submitting themselves, with the utmost disinterestedness, to Providence, living only on what should be given them by charity, without asking alms, or having any thing of their own.]

† [“ *Ignatius* and *Caraffa* preached together in the *Venetian State*, in 1557, and the two Orders of regular Clergy founded by them, within so short a time one of the other, were so like in many things, that the *Jesuits* were called *Theatins*.” *Bayle*.]

it. Its houses have not increased; and the small number of them, which are in being, support themselves by the breach of their fundamental precepts. Thus, like all the Mendicant Orders, the *Theatins* justify themselves by the words of our Saviour, which import, that the true Christian should imitate *the fowls of the air, which neither sow nor reap* §, and which give, by their existence, a striking proof of the attention of God to his creatures. The angelic life of the Fathers of the Desert, most of whom would be considered by the Magistrates, at present, as madmen or enthusiasts; the savage life of the || *Cartusians*, and of the Monks of *la * Trappe*, who renounce sociability, the characteristical duty of man, in order to render themselves more certain and more worthy of the rewards promised to men

§ [*Matt.* vi. 26.]

|| [See p. 247.]

* [This famous Abbey is in the province of *Perche*, in a large valley surrounded by hills and forests, which seem designed to hide it from the rest of the world. It was founded in 1140 by a Count of *Perche*. But the Monks having fallen into a great remissness of manners and discipline, a reformation was introduced into this Abbey, in 1662, by *Armand John Bouthillier de Rânceé*, its commandatory Abbot, so that it is now reckoned the most austere in all *France*. K. *James II.*, of *England*, used sometimes to retire hither on account of devotion. There is another Abbey of these Monks near *Florence*.]

faithful

faithful to their duties; the piety of St. *Alexis*, which the laws of all nations declare to be criminal and punishable; the punishments and proceedings of the Inquisition of Faith, which are directly contrary to the order of the civil Tribunals, and evidently clash with the spirit of charity, which was that of our Saviour; the particular vow of the Knights of *Malta*, and the piracy in which they glory, though we detest it in the *Algerines*; all this is justified by the sacred text, and is sanctified by the approbation of the Church, which proves it; or commands us to think it proved, by Holy Writ. Did the doctrine and discipline of the *Jesuits* seem still more rebellious to those who examine them with the eyes of a citizen, they would be a victorious engine of seduction, in the hands of able seducers, 'till the voice of authority should be lifted up against them.

“ THE security, in which some religious prejudices keep the Novice, is the vehicle of the grossest errors. Soon trained to distrust his own judgment; to have always a favourable presumption of that of others, and, especially, of his directors, he wanders so much the farther out of the way, as with the utmost confidence he thinks himself in the right road. I speak to one of the most
enlight-

enlightened Prelates of the *Gallican* Church; and I do not scruple to lay at his feet some ideas and opinions, which would be imputed to me as a crime on the other side the *Alps*. I am far from complaining, that the toleration granted to the other Religious Congregations should be refused to the *Jesuits*. I ought to reverence, and I respect a partiality, which may have its secret reasons: I say to myself, that the Sages who compose the Parliaments of *France* still are men, that, consequently, their understandings, how great soever they may be, have their bounds; and that it is very possible for them not to see with the same eye the same objects placed in different situations. But I dare promise your Lordship to demonstrate, that the laws of *France*, which the arrêts of the Sovereign Courts now quote against the *Jesuits*, pass the same sentence on the great Religious Orders of the *Romish* foundation as on the Company of *Jesus*. I go farther, my Lord; and I dare add, that if the gratitude of the nation does not operate in favour of the representatives of the ancient Order of *St. Benedict*, to which *France* owes the breaking up a great part of her lands, a taste for agriculture, and the formation of her manners; all the Congregations which belong to this first *European* Monk, and to his disciples, would

would not be able to controvert the objections of the Magistrates to their existence.

“ I HAVE digressed from my subject: I beg your Lordship’s pardon for it, and hope you will not impute this digression to any resentment. My principal object, in the letter which I do myself the honour to write to your Lordship, is to justify myself to you, as well for my long residence among the *Jesuits*, as for the readiness with which I have withdrawn myself from them. You, my Lord, have too much knowledge of mankind, not to be convinced, that I have been, for a number of years, the dupe and victim of my fervour and my prejudices. But the same knowledge of mankind would not suffer your Lordship to believe me, if I should tell you, that that fervour, and those prejudices, have been constantly kept up without diminution, and that I never felt any disgust for my bondage, any return of my heart and mind towards my liberty. I will therefore ingenuously confess, that, either from reason or vexation, I have wavered, more than once, as to the equity of the yoke which grew heavy on my shoulders. I have often regretted my having given myself masters; I have wished, I have even proposed to fly from them. But the scruples which I had on this subject were not proof against the
advice.

advice and remonstrances of the ghostly Fathers whom I thought myself obliged to consult. When I was of an age, and in a situation, to know that those ghostly Fathers were the confidants, or emissaries, of a despotic Ruler, suborned to take by surprise the secrets of my heart, to study and govern my mind, to tighten the bandage and to tie it again, if it began to slacken; then some considerations merely human, but able to subdue the most determined resolution, came to my assistance, and gave me, if not the consolations which I could no longer receive from piety, at least the constancy or resignation which reason affords. Vanity, shame, ambition, fear, induced me to fasten, myself, my fetters anew. The difficulty of procuring an honest maintenance in civil society, where the resentment of my tyrants was empowered to pursue me; the fear of being there stigmatised for irreligion by the numerous cabal of devotees, and for fickleness by persons of indifference, or of libertinism by the ignorant and the vulgar; the law which directed the same Magistrates, who have now released me, to pursue and treat me like a fugitive slave, if I released myself; the vain-glorious idea of making my patience admired by those who seemed to flatter themselves with exhausting it; and lastly,
the

the hopes of a less disagreeable hereafter, all these various passions, all these various emotions, enabled me to submit to my fate, and guarded me from disgust. All these were improved in value as soon as the quickness of my resentment gave way to reflection. Then my mind resuming, by degrees, a more easy posture, religion did not fail to regain, entirely, the superiority, and at the time, when, from prudence, I yielded to necessity, piety made me presumptuously think that I conformed myself to it from virtue.

“ SUCH, my Lord, is the progress of delusion and seduction with the greatest part of those who have taken the vow in religious societies, and who have made them a transfer of their existence, or at least of their manner of existing, at an age when the laws do not deem them capable of disposing of the smallest part of their inheritance. Ardour, and obstinacy its attendant, proceed to extremes in a youth, who knows that his relations lament the loss of him, that those to whom he devotes himself, prize the acquisition. With all the devotion that can be imagined, he enjoys his little importance; because thinking himself sacrificed to God, he is piously fond of ascribing some merit to the sacrifice which he wishes to be meritorious. When his ardour cools, the seduction
has.

has no longer the same power: he has a glimpse of the falshood of his prejudices. But he sees at a very small distance the end of this first slavery, through which all the Professed, who appear to him so contented with their lot, have passed. He fixes his mind on that state of Profession, of which he is assured, if he persists; his imagination makes him anticipate the enjoyment of the distinctions and prerogatives which are annexed to it. All childish as they are, they strikingly affect him, because he considers them only in the relations which they bear to him. It is this point of view alone which makes the difference between the most splendid honours of Courts and the obscure distinctions of Cloisters. Audiencés of the King, ordinary and extraordinary †, seem nothing to a Monk; and the Courtier ridicules the joy of the young Professed, who has just been admitted to the stove of the Rector, who has just obtained leave to go into the parlour. The young *Jesuit* is as well pleased with the ferula which is put into his hand, as an old General with the bâton of command which he receives from

† [In the original it is, *Les grandes et petites entrées chez le Roi*, &c. which cannot literally be translated, the French expression, like a technical term, having been adopted in our Court.]

from his Majesty. The young *Capuchin* is no less satisfied with his cloak, than a Peer with his blue ribbon *. In all Religious Societies, the young Professed have their minds successively fixed on the immunities annexed to each of the steps by which they may rise to command. This prospect of a kind of sovereignty makes the least pious surmount the reluctance which they sometimes have to obey. If the prejudices and seduction entirely discover themselves to the eyes of those whom age, reading, and reason have just enlightened as to the loss of their liberty, their misery is at the height; as the laws, in contradiction to themselves, will not admit them into that civil society, from which they reproach those wretches for withdrawing. The laws condemn the contract, yet punish the breach of it: they declare the age at which it passed, incompetent, yet refuse to receive the protestation made of its nullity at an age more mature; they call it unlawful, yet oblige it to be deemed valid.

“ I BEG your Lordship would deign to descend, for a moment, to the situation of a *Jesuit*, whose reason, after his engagement, expanded, whose prejudices were weakened,

† [The distinguishing badge of Knights of the Holy Ghost.]

whose

whose piety was cooled. He found himself attached to the Church by the last holy orders: he saw no hopes of fortune or settlement, except in the Church; and the Church threatened to punish him for returning into civil society: she gave him up to the discretion of those whom he would have abandoned. Your Lordship knows, that the Professed of the third vow was bound to the Society of *Jesuits*, which was not bound to him. If he was desirous of breaking his bonds, he must necessarily have the leave of the General, unless he changed his slavery, and took refuge with the *Cartusians*: for if he sought an asylum any where else, he might always apprehend the being demanded, and given up as a deserter. There was nothing but the incapacity of the subject, with regard to the service of the Company, which could render his masters indifferent to the loss of him, and could obtain their leave of dismissal; and they had so many methods of availing themselves of mankind, that such a subject was never known among them. The most stupid was, for that reason, the better fitted to go and be whipped in *China*, or crucified in *Japan*. The only step which remained for the discontented to take, was, to make a virtue of necessity, and to gain the favour of his masters by the readiness

diness of his obedience, by an appearance of zeal on all occasions.

"I was twenty-eight years old, when I was admitted to dispose, irretrievably, of my fortune, and to engage myself by the third vow. I was taught to set a great value on that forward esteem with which I was honoured, and which induced my superiors to raise me to the high rank of a Professed at so early an age. At the same time, my destination was declared for the foreign Missions. I sincerely protest to your Lordship, that my head was so much heated with the merit of the Apostolical labours, and with the glory of martyrdom, that there was no room in it for reflections to the disadvantage of the Institute. *Francis † Xavier*, the most illustrious disciple of *St. Ignatius*, was offered to me as a model. Some miracles by him were quoted to me, more brilliant and more

† ["Surnamed the Apostle of the *Indies*. He was a native of *Navarre*. At *Paris*, where he studied, he contracted a friendship with *Ignatius de Loyola*, and was one of his first associates in founding the Society of *Jesus*. They went afterwards to *Rome*, from whence *Xavier* was sent by *Pope Paul III*, as a Missionary, into the *East Indies*. There, after preaching the Gospel at *Goa*, *Malacca*, *Japan*, &c. he died, as he was entering *China*, in 1552. He was beatified in 1619, and canonised in 1622." *Moreri*.]

numerous than those of all the Apostles together. How could I deny myself the pious ambition of working miracles like him? How could I avoid thinking myself in the right road, by walking in the path which he had cleared or trod? It is true, my Lord, I had no occasion to live long among the Savages and *Caribbees* of *America*, and with the *Indians* on the coast of *Malabar*, to abate much of my faith in the miracles of the holy *Jesuits*. But the object of my mission did not therefore appear to me less noble and less good. I did not imagine that the ambition of entering a long article in the registers of the Congregation de *Propagandâ* at *Rome*, had dictated to the General the arrêt of my banishment among the Barbarians. I deemed it generous to attempt, at the hazard of my life, to civilise Savages. I thought I served Religion and the Church by endeavouring to draw idolaters to the worship, which I think the only one worthy of the Deity, the only true one; and I sacrificed with my whole heart to both these works a taste for ease and the conveniences of life.

“ I RECEIVED my instructions before my departure from *Europe*. I was aware that *Rome* lost the greatest part of the *European* States which were subject to her, by want of condescension; and that, instructed by experience

rience to relax of her discipline, and even of her doctrine, she allows her priests to accommodate them to times, places, and circumstances. I knew, that, in many parts of *Germany*, she permits them to sing in *German* in the churches : that she puts a cheat, in the *Palatinate*, on the denial of the cup in the communion, by allowing, as a gargle, a mouthful of wine after receiving the sacred Host ; that, not to startle in *Saxony* the *Lutherans*, in the midst of whom is a small troop of Catholics, she is silent, or gives some explanations and softenings, as to the text, *Out of the Church no salvation*. I had been made to observe, that, by means of a severity which the profane call cruelty and barbarity, *Rome* has preserved or restored to her communion some States of which Heresy threatened to deprive her. The pious inhumanity of the Inquisition was justified by a learned exposition of the parable of the feast, in which the master of the family, having gathered together some guests by making them come in willingly or by force, orders those to be cast into the fire *who have not on a wedding garment* †. It was proved to me, that, by this allegory, our Saviour authorises every method of obtaining children for his Church, and that he

† [*Matth.* XXII. 2—13.]

directs his Ministers to give no quarter, when they are the strongest, to those of whom they may make an useful example. The history of the favourite of the King of Syria, whom the Prophet *Elisba* allows to accompany the King his master into the temple of some false Gods, and to present to him the incense which he offered to them †, was represented to me as a fact which ought to silence all the enemies of toleration. The order of our Saviour to his disciples to *eat all such things as should be set before them* ‡, ought to be regarded, I was told, as a full power to allow a dispensation with fasts and abstinences. At length, I obtained a conviction of the excellence of the doctrine prescribed by those Divines who are not *Jesuits*.

“ Did it become me to reason and doubt, when the Sovereign Pontiffs assured me, that I should be innocent before God and the Church for what I should do and think by the order of my superiors? when I evidently saw, that my untowardness would draw upon me the severest chastisements, without producing any thing but a shameful scandal? I know,

† [2 Kings, V. 18. *The thing, for which Naaman intreated the Lord to pardon him, was his barwing himself, when his master leaned on his hand, in the house of Rimmon.*]

‡ [Luke X. 8.]

my Lord, that the Apostolical System of the *Jesuits* has always displeased you. But it is impossible for it to make me suspected by your Lordship, if you condescend to observe, ever so little, that I have long pursued it sincerely, and that my engagements made it a duty to me, laid me under a necessity of following it; that, for my safety, my tranquillity, I must appear to adopt it without restriction. The same principle of obedience, which made me walk intrepidly in the wrong path, will conduct me, with the same security, into that which the *Gallican* Church points out to me, from which alone I now receive my superiors. This obedience, to which the mind of a *Jesuit* is so perfectly bent, I venture to mention to your Lordship as the most powerful recommendation in favour of those whom the laws have just freed from the yoke of the chiefs of the Company of *Jesus*. If the Clergy of *France* || should think proper to undertake a national Commentary on all the Sacred Writings, and to fix the multiplicity of contested in-

|| The idea is new and good. A *Gallican* Commentary, an explanation which should fix the sense which the laws of the Kingdom give to texts, with which Divines arm themselves one against the other, would put an end to the disputes which *Rome* loves to cherish, in order to evoke them to her tribunal.

N

terpretations,

terpretations, explanations, and consequences, to the only sense, which reason, our laws, and manners can admit, they could not have more ardent and more faithful instructors of their people than the heretofore *Jesuits*. The spring will lose nothing of its force by being set at work by other hands, and receiving another direction. The Diocesan Prelate might, if he pleased, invest himself with most of the rights over his new subjects that the General of the *Jesuits* † has over his. Deign, my Lord, to take into consideration this opening. The Clergy of *France* had never so much occasion, as at present, to fortify themselves against the other Orders of the State, who are jealous of their wealth and their prerogatives: They had never so much occasion to strengthen the intercourse of Prelates with their subalterns. The reasons of the times demand the same proportion of happiness for all Citizens, because they are all men in the same degree. We shall soon hear them demand the same state, and the same lot, for all Priests.

“ THERE is only one objection to the idea which I have the honour to offer to your

† From this insinuation, one can scarce believe M. *le Franc* so honest a man, and so little of a *Jesuit*, as he pretends.

Lord.

Lordship; and that is founded on a doubt of the sincerity of the *Ex-Jesuits* return into civil society. As I do not think your Lordship liable to such a suspicion, I will not intreat you to consider how unreasonable it would be. Could it enter into the head of any one, that galley-slaves would refuse freedom, and adhere to their chain, in spite of the authority which has broken it? Yet I neither can nor will answer for my old brethren on this head. Seduction is so ingenious in reconciling itself to those minds which have given it an advantage!

“ I ANSWER for myself, my Lord, and I have behaved, ever since the beginning of the crisis, in such a manner as to deserve to be believed. When I entered into my first engagements with the Company of *Jesús*, I was not in a situation to know whether the Parliaments of the Kingdom had a right or power to annul a legitimation granted by our Kings; whether it was their province to consider the most formal allowance by the Sovereign, and the protection, most plainly declared, of most of the Sovereign Courts, as only a toleration at pleasure. I looked upon the various declarations of our Kings, registered in Parliament, which have regulated and ascertained to the Society of *Jesús* its manner of existing in *France*, as an exact

act adoption. Could I see things in any other light, when I had before my eyes some Royal Ordinances, invested with all the forms, some arrêts passed, in consequence, by the Parliaments, to give the Company of *Jesus* a preferable distinction to other Religious Congregations, to give it superior privileges, to interpret the engagements of each *Jesuit* in the sense of the Founder, to adapt them to the civil laws, or to set them above them, to extend to the age of thirty-three years the connections of all and of each of them with their families, the right of property in their patrimonial estates, and the power of re-entering into the one, or disposing of the other, fifteen years after their first vows? Could I have any suspicion of the nation being displeased with men to whom she entrusted, with a remarkable preference, the education of her young Nobility, with men whom three of our most glorious Monarchs chose for the depositaries of their mortal remains, with men of whose acquaintance the Great and the Magistrates were desirous, whose good will they esteemed a honour, whose friendship a happiness, whose protection a favour?

“ I THOUGHT therefore, and I was disposed to think, that I entered among the *Jesuits* with the consent, and under the protection,

tection, of the laws. I should never have entered among them, if I had had the least suspicion of the contrary. As soon as the voice of authority reached me, as soon as I could discover the submission, which, in preference, is due to her, and be suffered to depart with safety, I did not hesitate to obey her. I said to myself, that, by obeying readily, I should prove that I obeyed sincerely. I hastened to abjure the regimen, which, she told me, was proscribed by the laws; because I was convinced, that the first obligation of a true Christian is, not to disturb the order which they have established in civil society; because, my eyes being opened to the duty which every man owes to his country, I perceived the unlawfulness of my attachment to a foreign master.

“I AM not apprehensive that your Lordship will insist on the appearance of liberty in my last engagement. It is true, that I pronounced the third vow at an age when I was no longer allowed by the law to claim indulgence, and to reserve to myself a protest of nullity. But I ought not to be referred to that date. From the first moment of my entrance among the *Jesuits* to that of my taking the *third vow,

* [Besides the three vows of poverty, chastity, and monastic obedience, which are common to all the monastic Orders, the *Jesuits* take a fourth vow of implicit obedience to the Pope.]

I was constantly in the same state of seduction; and I did not see more clearly into the Institute at twenty-eight years of age than at eighteen. Kept in a dependence equally rigorous, and under a tuition always equally attentive to deprive me even of the desire of emancipation, I contracted the last time with the same incapacity, and by the same impulse, as the first. I have therefore the same reasons to remonstrate against the acts of the one as of the other.

“ALLOW me, my Lord, to observe, that the liberty granted by the laws of *France* to every Monk to sue for an abrogation of his vows, provided he prosecutes the suit within five years after making the profession, is a favour, of which, it appears, very few of those unfortunate men have taken the advantage. Besieged, during all that time, by those who are interested in keeping up their delusion, they neither know all the injustice of the yoke, nor all the innocence of the means, which they have in their power, of shaking it off, and releasing themselves. Their reason has not its full play, and does not gain the ascendant, till an acquaintance with the world, an intercourse with civil society, and the operation of strong passions, begin to enlighten them as to the promises which they have made, and the wants which they have imposed

sed on themselves; and then the term prescribed by the law is passed, and they are no longer allowed to claim the benefit of it.

"It was from a knowledge of this monastic mechanism, that, in the assemblies of the Clergy of 1732 and 1737, the illustrious Bishop of *Seez* in *Normandy* (*P'Allemant*) maintained the insufficiency of the law for the benefit of the youth imprudently or forcibly engaged in cloisters, and proposed to decree, that, for the future, the Religious Orders should not be suffered to admit Candidates to their Noviciate, before the age of twenty-four years complete, and to the Profession before that of twenty-five. It is the same knowledge that makes all the religious congregations so difficult as to the Candidates who have passed their early youth. A century ago, the *Carthusians* were known to refuse the pious and learned † *Charron*, author of the admirable

† [“ *Peter Charron* was at first an Advocate in the Parliament, but afterwards studied Divinity, and became a most eminent preacher. Being desirous to end his days among the *Carthusians* at *Paris*, he made a vow to embrace their Order, and then discovered his intention to the Prior. But he being then forty-seven or forty-eight years old, they excused themselves from receiving him, by representing the necessity there was that a man should be accustomed, from his youth, to the austerity of that Order. He met with the same refusal from the *Celestines*; after which, certain casuists declaring him

book *On Wisdom*, who wished to devote himself entirely to God in retirement, aged about forty years. With what ease does a scholar, who has never had money but to buy fruit, engage to live without personal property? What can discourage him from promising obedience, him to whom even the college-servants and his mother's maids have spoken in a peremptory tone? Why should he be deterred from promising to be, all his life, the friend of a virtue, of which he is utterly unacquainted with the opposite vice, and against which his heart and his constitution have as yet given him no suggestions? When his passions expand themselves, he informs his Directors of the progress of their expansion. They watch over his ardour and his prejudices, determine him to contend with them, and support him with their advice. The term of five years elapses before the time of his defeat, or without his having light to conduct him out of the field.

“ Thus, as the acts done by a prisoner are not more valid in the twentieth than in the first year of his confinement, the engagements of a Monk, fallen for thirty years under the yoke of an Institute, to vows, do not

free from his vow, he resolved to finish his days under the character of a secular Priest. He died in 1603, being then Canon and Chanter of *Condern*.” Bayle.]

bind

bind him any more than those which began his slavery. He is forcibly under the tyranny of habit, and that in a case much more favourable than the fornicator, whose last will and marriage *in extremis* are annulled by the laws of the Kingdom. Your Lordship is too well acquainted with the truth of these principles to make it necessary for me to accompany them with proofs. As you would have been pleased with me for abandoning the *Jesuits* after my first vow, if I had then detected or discovered them; you will commend me for quitting them long after the third, as I renounced them as soon as I could do it with honour, with safety. Be pleased, my Lord, to judge me with the generosity which you can unite to the most judicious equity. Just set at liberty, I perceive that my new state of life is not formed for my age. I must have a master, and your Lordship is the master I wish to have.

I have the honour to be,
with the profoundest respect, &c.

L E T T E R XXIX.

TO MR. JAMES N. MERCHANT IN
LONDON.

Confirmation of Letter XIII. Remarkable account to the disadvantage of the Office of Commerce in France. Reflections on facts. Principal inconveniences of the necessity of grants or privileges.

See Letter XIII.

SIR,

I Did not pretend that we had not our dis-
seases as well as our neighbours. If I had
carried my esteem for the *British* Government
to such an excess, your letter would have
been altogether proper to undeceive me.
Whatever the King's Ministers and the depu-
ted representatives of the nation may be, they
will always furnish zealous patriots with just
complaints. But this will not often be their
fault. We should, to console us for things
not succeeding thoroughly well in all the de-
partments, observe, that, in general, they
succeed as well as possible. The balance, as
able

able philosophers pretend, is exactly even in nature as to physical good and evil. Equality, they say, must absolutely subsist, that the established order may be preserved. Can art go farther than the imitation of nature? Can able politicians flatter themselves with building a better system than that of the Government of the Universe? I could be tempted to make a list parallel to yours, and to quote, in numerical order, the useful institutions which counterbalance the abuses and neglects, which you have sought out with so much penetration and ill humour. But whither would the contest carry us? You write in order to converse with me, and I would not engage in a dispute with my friend. Be the *Heracitus* of *England*, my dear Sir, if you please; and allow me not to be so strongly interested in what affects others, as to have my tranquillity discomposed by it. You are much mistaken, you and the other Lords of the City, if you imagine, that four or five millions of good *Englishmen* (myself included) consider your porto-folios as the thermometers of the *British* happiness or misery. Tell me honestly, whether, for want of half the paper which you have amassed, you would be unhappy? If you will recollect, that, ten years ago, you were less burthened with embarrassment and anxiety, and better supplied with gaiety and a taste

taste for pleasure, though you were without that half, I shall guess your answer. What day so fortunate for our country, O my friend, as the day, when, in a general assembly of your Peers, you would be made to receive only half a national Jubilee ! The whole entire operation cost the Duke-Regent of *France*, forty years ago, only a dash of the pen; and the scar of it hardly remains. You are not such conformable patients as the *Parisians*; therefore I will prescribe nothing to you but by way of regimen. The super-cargoes of a ship battered by a storm do not wait for the despair of the pilots and the discouragement of the sailors, in order to relieve the vessel, and procure the safety of half her lading by throwing the other overboard: The grand point is to make the sacrifice at such a time, and in such a manner, as to draw an advantage from it. Great care should be taken to prevent its falling on the chests of the crew and the trunks of the passengers. I would lay a wager that you will deem what I say a banter. Nothing, however, is more serious. When the rich † *Bussy* saw his return from the

† [This Officer greatly distinguished himself in the last war in the *East Indies* both in the military and civil capacity. He was at length taken prisoner by Colonel *Coote* at the battle of *Wanderwash* (where he acted as Brigadier-General) Jan. 22, 1760, and was brought to
England.

Indies into *Europe* determined, do you think he would have refused the insurance of our Company at the rate of half the million of pounds sterling which he had acquired in *India*? You will answer, that he preserved his fortune on a better footing; and I reply, that that was lucky, but is no rule.

THAT you may not be exposed to have me differ from you in opinion, you need only examine the conduct of our Government with relation to objects as to which you are not affected except by the general interest of your country. I am greatly mistaken, if we are not then, as formerly, pretty much of the same opinion. After repeating to you, that it is from conviction that I adhere to my first ideas of the *French Office of Commerce* †, which you esteem beyond measure, I shall proceed to give you, with great simplicity, just as I received it, an account able to make you abate of it; When you know that this ‡ account has just been published in a pamphlet fortified with the

England. He is now supposed to be the richest subject in *France*, and is called "the *Clive of Paris*."]]

† See Vol. 1. p. 183, &c.

‡ *Exposition des propriétés du spalme, &c.* (An explanation of the properties of sheathing, &c.) Printed at *Paris*, by le Breton, the King's printer. The same account, except in a few expressions, was given in the *Année Littéraire* of M. Freron, in the 3d sheet of the year 1763.

approbation.

approbation of the Pólice, and that it has made no impression, you will know still better how many degrees the lethargy, in which you suppose us to be as to the interests of commerce, is distant from that in which our industrious neighbours are plunged by their Government itself.

BEING at St. *Germain-en-Laye*, five short leagues distant from this Capital, and having soon satisfied the curiosity which alone had drawn me thither, I was desirous of seeing a manufactory of a new kind of sheathing, lately set up below that little town. You know that to *sheath* a ship is nothing more than to pitch and tar her, to pay or grave her, in order to make her as impervious as possible to the sea-water and the gnawing of the worms. The usual paying or graving is a composition of gum, sulphur, oil, and tallow, melted and calcined; ground glass and other materials are sometimes mixed up with it. But this does not render the paying more durable, or more proper to defend ships from the inconveniences which are meant to be avoided. Its peculiar property is to be equally tenacious over all the surface which it covers, and neither to crack nor peel, till its age fixes the time of its dissolution.

ONE *John Maille*, of the province of *Normandy*, and of a family to which this country
owes

owes the establishment of the cloth manufactories at *Elbeuf* and *Louviers*, discovered, in 1718, a composition far superior in all respects to those which supplied the different maritime nations with sheathing. His discovery was published in *France* and in foreign countries. Some trials of it were made, which had the approbation of the experienced. The *Dutch*, with whom the true spirit of commerce never sleeps, averred that they were sensible of all the importance of the discovery: their Admiralty people thought it worthy of the attention of the States of the Province. That assembly of the first Statesmen of the Republic no sooner took cognisance of it, than they sought out the inventor, by offering him an exclusive privilege for himself and his family, all the exemptions that he demanded, and a gratuity of a hundred thousand † florins, if he would bring his manufactory into *Holland*. *Maille*, whom some family reasons, and his attachment to his native land, induced to prefer *France* to a foreign country, and who, besides, having seen the much less important discovery of the transmutation of iron into steel, and of the cooling of melted iron, made by *M. de Reaumur*, recompensed with a pension of a ‡ thousand livres, could not flat-

† [A *Dutch* florin is about 19 10d $\frac{1}{2}$ sterling.]

‡ [A late biographer of *M. de Reaumur*, says that
" his

ter himself with a less fortune from his Prince than he would have made in *Holland*, imparted his discovery to the Duke-Regent, and at the same time transmitted to that Prince the letter which contained the offer of their High Migh-
tinesses. The Duke seemed sensible of the importance of keeping so rare a secret in the Kingdom. He began by expressly forbidding *Maille* to communicate it to foreigners: in the sequel, his Royal Highness promised him some assistance and reward. These were mere words. But the artist did not scruple to rely on them, when the Prince had given him an order to make five or six thousand quintals of his sheathing for the King's ships, and for those of the *India Company*. He flew to *Rouen*, the Capital of *Normandy*, a city to which the *Seine* brings up ships of two or three hundred tons, and which was thoroughly proper for the establishment of the manufactory, by the ease of opening its produce, by the quantity of work supplied by its people, by the low price of its provisions which makes labour less dear, lastly, by the number and

"his experiments on the art of turning iron into steel
 "obtained him a pension of *twelve thousand* livres; and
 "this reward is to be continued to the Academy to
 "support the expence which may accrue in this art." See
Memoirs of his life in the Gentleman's Magazine for Sep-
tember last, p. 394. This excellent Naturalist died in
 1757.]

riches

riches of its merchants, capable of providing a fund for an expensive undertaking. *Maille*, who had very good reasons for not entering into partnership, made some loans more proportioned to the future profits of his labour than to his present fortune; and went to work. The demolition of the system of the famous *Scotchman* happened before *Maille* could make his returns: When he presented himself in order to begin them, he narrowly escaped being punished for daring to hope for any thing from the Government in the disorder in which its finances were. In vain he appealed to the word and order of the Duke-Regent, and demanded, that, at least, he should not be left charged with a quantity of merchandise that was bespoken, for which he then had not purchasers: he was not even allowed to give in any account of what he had advanced.

As he had not thought of obtaining a patent for a work which the Sovereign himself had ordered, it was necessary for him to suspend his operations in order to solicit the patent, and to exhaust himself in applications so as to weary or convince the gentlemen of the Office. This he did not accomplish till seven or eight years after. The *Pancarte* was passed, I know not on what conditions, the 17th of *May*, 1727. Nevertheless, the creditors, who were not such as would attend to the
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the reasonable hopes of *Maille*, pursued him with the utmost rigour. After having sold his effects, they had the ignorant severity to do the same by his magazines. The materials being already changed, either by the work or by time, produced scarce enough to pay for the law-proceedings and the rent of the buildings for the manufactory. *Maille* having no longer any fortune but his secret, yet had the courage not to quit his country, where he ran a continual risk of being imprisoned. In waiting for some conjunctures more favourable, for which he still presumed to hope, he dragged on in indigence and obscurity the twenty years for which the patent had been granted him. He then found himself at the same point that he was when the desertion of the Duke-Regent had reduced him to bankruptcy. Chicanery having its resources open for the wretched as well as for the wicked, the unfortunate *Maille* had not ceased to contend with his unmerciful creditors; and after twenty or twenty five-years, Justice very seasonably gave him a *writ of demurrer*, by means of which he could appear with safety, and attend to his affairs. His principal business was to solicit a renewal of the patent from which he had received no advantage. The solicitation this time cost him only three years. But he consumed all the fourth in surmounting

ting the opposition which was made, I know not from whence or by whom, to the registering of the said patent, a form without which the Pancarte is useless. This patent was dated the 14th of *June*, 1750; it was registered on the 8th of *May* in the year following. You will observe, that, for this second grant, the inventor was obliged to make some experiments, and to multiply the proofs, as if the matter in question had been totally foreign to the grant passed twenty years before, and to the gentlemen of the Office.

MAILLE could not avoid forming a partnership in order to have a fund. But just as, without doubt, he had always apprehended, his associates were soon desirous of being his masters, and did not delay to become tyrants. They paid no regard to his representations as to the place of the manufactory. In spite of all his endeavours, he was obliged to establish it between *Paris* and *St. Germain-en-Laye*, about three leagues from the Capital. This, you see, was admirably chosen for the magazines of a commodity which is of no use but in sea-ports, which takes up much room, and the preparing of which ought to be at the lowest price in order to promote the sale. The price of a quintal was at first set at sixty livres (2l. 15s. sterling.) This exorbitant price was soon reduced a sixth. This was not low enough;

enough; the quintal came to forty-five livres, afterwards to forty, then to thirty-seven livres 10 sols, delivered at *Rouen*, to thirty eight livres delivered at *Havre*. The imagination and judgment of the gentlemen in partnership had not yet discovered, that, by establishing the manufactory at a distance from the sea-ports, they threw a new difficulty in the way of its success. The sheathing sold. But the avarice of the partners, people accustomed to gain fifty *per cent.* in the employment of their money, was not satisfied with the profit, though very reasonable. They occasioned *Maille* so much chagrin and disgust, that the poor man thought himself too happy in being able, at the price of his secret only, to separate from them, and to free himself from the claims which they made at his expence. He transferred his patent and his hopes, which were not yet extinguished, to one *Besnard* his son-in-law, to whom he communicated his secret.

BESNARD made some ineffectual efforts to restore the manufactory. The funds, before insufficient under the direction of the father-in-law the inventor, absolutely failed under that of the son-in-law the substitute. *Maille* died miserably the 5th of *August*, 1754, and immediately after, the partners went to law with his heirs and legatees. There is no doubt that

that this avaricious partnership flattered itself with reducing them to the necessity of giving up the secret, which is still their road to fortune. It removed them, successively, to the *Châtelet*, which is the chief subaltern jurisdiction of *Paris*, to the Parliament, and to the Great Council, which is the highest tribunal in the Kingdom. The matter fell under the cognisance of Consular Justice, which would have determined it in three days, by the help of a strong recommendation, which, one would think, the Office of Commerce could not have refused it. After three years process in the three tribunals, the latter referred the cause to the Consular Tribunal, for a definitive sentence. What do you think that sentence was? *Besnard* and the daughters of *Maille*, his co-heiresses and legatees, were declared free and released from all engagements with the partners of the deceased.

BESNARD attempted to keep himself at liberty, and to work alone. Hoping that his funds would increase in proportion to the sale, he immediately reduced the price of a quintal to seventeen livres. But the narrowness of his circumstances setting bounds to his work, and denying him many conveniences, which would have lessened the expence of it, he has at length hazarded the same fate as his father-in-law: he has taken in some
part.

partners, who will soon be inclined to think that it is he who ought to be taken in by them. The profit, which appeared reasonable to this laborious man, is no longer so to those hornets with whom he must act in concert. The price of a quintal is risen to twenty-eight livres, delivered at the place of the manufactory. It is twenty-nine delivered at *Rouen*, and twenty-nine, ten sols, at *Havre*. This second partnership, as blind as the former, does not perceive that the abatement of those thirty sols would be the least favour which they might shew the buyers, if the manufactory were placed more within their reach.

I COULD add to these authentic facts a great many more of the same kind, and still more recent. But if your prejudice be proof against these, I should have little hopes of subduing it by numbers. Imagine to yourself this discovery of a new sheathing made among us by an *Englishman*. Whom and what would he find to contest with him the enjoyment of his treasure? I will suppose him so destitute of means to improve it, as to be obliged to borrow the three shillings, which the advertising his discovery in a news-paper will cost him. Scarce is the advertisement published, but it becomes matter of speculation to a crowd of merchants. They seek for the man, they invite him to make some trials, for
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the charge of which they largely provide: many advantageous proposals are offered him; he is only embarrassed which to chuse. Will he sell his secret? The purchasers are quite ready. Will he work as chief proprietor? The only security that is required of him, is to receive a store-keeper, and a cashier for the produce of his work. On these terms, so equitable and so little burthen some to a man who acts with integrity, he will instantly find a fund sufficient to carry his manufactory to perfection. Does he chuse to form a partnership? He is only required to ascertain the share which he holds in the society. Before a month is elapsed after the publication of his discovery, he begins to reap the fruits of it.

In a Government well formed for commerce, what has the State to do with an invention of this kind? Of what service is its patent? If the method be good, the manufactory will recommend itself; and without any other assistance, it will obtain an universal preference. Will you say, that the patent is a reward to the inventor? You are in the right, if that patent be exclusive. But is not such a patent, in all sorts of discoveries, the ruin of genius and industry? From the road which one has found open why should others be excluded? Why should the Public be made dependent on a man perhaps avaricious,

avaricious, who has no advantage over others but that of having walked some steps before them? Why should we refuse to believe, that, some years later, the discovery, which offered itself to him, might have been made by another? By letting him enjoy it as soon as he pleases, a sufficient recompence is given him. He, who shall perfect the invention, will have trouble enough to gain credit; and if he succeeds so as to take place of the inventor, will it not be allowed that he deserves it? Has not he, who proceeds to publish the discovery, a right to use it as his own property? Is any injustice done to the first inventor by putting him on a par with one as able and as lucky as himself? Besides, let ten adepts pronounce that the new sheathing is better than the old, yet I shall think as well of myself as of those ten adepts; and if my prejudice for the old should not yield to their authority, by what right shall I be obliged to give my ships a paying which I think inferior? Shall I not have reason to impute to that tyranny of Government the accidents which my vessels may sustain at sea?

BUT let us not rave at the exclusive privilege, which is by no means the matter in question here. The privilege granted by the Office of Commerce is merely a permission given to the inventor to work in his own method,

thod, and to vend the produce of it. I allow that, for the sake of good order, they do well in requiring this permission. But then what need has the Office of repeated trials, of authentic proofs and testimonials? The State embarks nothing of her own in the undertaking: Leave the undertakers to their first ardour. If they are in an error, they will soon discover it, and dissolve the partnership. Their imprudence injures only their private fortune, which is totally indifferent to the State, while she is strongly interested in animating every one to make an advantage of his own genius, talents, and estate. "Oh! but every good Government is an imitation of paternal Government; and it highly becomes it to restrain such of its children as might be betrayed into foolish dissipations." Admirable, Sir. But we are not talking of foolish dissipations ruinous to the family, which is the State. All those imprudences and dissipations, on the contrary, turn to her advantage, whatever be their consequences. Recollect our Dr. *Mandeville's Fable of the Bees*, and improve his hints. I will, however, admit your idea of paternal Government, by urging you to find the imitation of it in the conduct of the *French Office* with respect to *Maille* and his discovery. Those gentlemen were well and duly convinced

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vinced of the superior goodness of the new sheathing. In the same light in which they saw the inventor, they ought, I think, to have viewed the rest of the King's subjects, and, as much for his benefit as for their advantage, the price of the new commodity should have been fixed in such a manner as to procure a just recompence for him, without suffering him to impose upon them. Observe how the paternal cares have operated. Taking, as a just price, that which is the medium between the present price of the partnership, and that which *Besnard* thought supportable, the price of a quintal will be twenty-four livres (1*l.* 1*s.* sterling.) The gentlemen of the Office suffered it to be raised immediately to sixty livres (2*l.* 14*s.*) If this extravagant price disgusted the Public, the manufactory must remain in its infancy, and perish by decay. If the Public did not observe the excessive avarice of the partners, the royal Marine and the mercantile Marine were aggrieved, trade was injured, the State and the subjects were oppressed by a small number of individuals. The first object of the Office ought therefore to have been the price of the produce of the new manufactory. After that, these Guardians of commerce should not have excused themselves from taking into consideration the situation of the manufactory, the

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accounts of its work, the advantage of increasing its fabricks. Would it enter into the head of any *Englishman* to establish at *Kensington*, or *Kew*, a manufactory of anchors, or cables? The establishment of a marine manufactory in the neighbourhood of *Paris* is a false reasoning peculiarly *French*. It reminds me of a frigate of war, which was built, two years ago, below the last bridge of this Capital, in sight of the Hospital of Invalids, by a ship-builder, a native of *Geneva*. The frigate was launched with the utmost solemnity. Her masts and rigging were preparing, when a *Seine*-waterman observed, that “she would not easily accomplish her destination, (which was to go on a cruize against the *English*,) because there was not water enough, in some parts of the river, to carry her down to *Rouen*.” Some zealous, who were absolutely bent on making the banner of *Notre Dame* of *Paris* be displayed at sea, proposed to put the frigate on board one of the large flat boats which go up from *Rouen* to *Paris* laden with wood and corn. But the *Parisian* volunteers, who had offered themselves for the cruize, refused to reach the sea in such a vessel, and the destination of the frigate was laid aside †.

† The fact is literally true, but our *Englishman* is mistaken as to the date. The frigate was launched in 1761. It remains in the middle of the river, unrigged, and has been converted into a tavern.

THE manufactory of sheathing, undertaken by a partnership at *Paris*, and placed at *St. Germain-en-Laye*, equals the privateer built at *Paris* by a *Genevese* builder. Casks of sheathing are as foreign to this Capital as † Pantins are to *Brest* and *Toulon*; and I think it as difficult for the first manufacturer to enrich himself in the situation which he chose, as it would be impossible for the second to gain, in those sea-ports, the hundred thousand crowns with which the *Parisian* frivolousness supplies him in a few months.

You will be much surprised, Sir, to hear me alledge to you the necessity of a patent as the greatest obstacle in *France* to the progress of useful arts, though even by granting it, the gentlemen of the Office would have many considerations which now they have not. Be pleased to enter with me into particulars. The artist, who solicits a patent, is seldom within reach of addressing himself directly to the Chiefs of the Office. He will certainly find a solicitor, who will enhance the difficulties, in order to set a higher price on his solicitation. At length the agreement is signed. The affair will be divided into twenty sols,

† [A kind of dolls for grown gentlemen and ladies, which were, a few years ago, imported, but met with little encouragement in *England*.]

or actions of one sol. The solicitor keeps at least one. The Office deliberates, it resolves, and favourably. But the dispatcher of the Pancarte understands his business : by his slowness he contrives to give time for an opposition to be formed, he himself will produce opposers, if one action, at least, be not speedily granted him. For the registering, another artifice. It will be great good luck if that costs no more than a third sol. The partnership, after having long disputed with the artist, at length agrees to receive, for two actions, his secret, and his industry to make it valuable. Here are five actions in figures, there remain fifteen in reality. The livres resemble the supposition of twenty thousand pounds sterling in the funds, which in fact are only fifteen. The price of the work of the manufacture must therefore be set above its just value, at least one fourth, supposing the real partners honest and moderate men. However, the manufacture gains credit : it must add to its first funds, because its sale becomes great. The partners begin to think that the artist, who has his two actions gratis, is a burthen to them : the two other benefited stock-holders are still more burthensome, but with these, terms must be kept, because they may be hurtful. The first battery is planted against the benefactor of the partnership. It is well

known that he subsists on the dividend. In a general meeting, where new expences are determined, it is agreed that, in order to increase the funds, the dividend shall for some time be left to accumulate; the artist is reduced to the necessity of going to law; and while the counsellors and attorneys are engaged on both sides, another meeting contracts with the King for a considerable supply, the payment for which is postponed to a distant term, through zeal for the service of the State. If the artist gains the suit, what does he gain? If he loses it, he sells his secret to the partnership in order to secure himself from his own creditors as well as he can. Heaven preserve us from this excellent order which you admire!

I am, &c.

LET;

LETTER XXX.

TO LORD C.

Advice of the approaching signature of the Preliminaries of Peace. Alternative of the English as to the Treaty. Present advantages of Great Britain over France. Considerations on the apparent decline of the French. Digression into politics on general principles. That luxury and licentiousness of manners are only diseases in the body politic. That the true causes of the ruin of great States have been owing to chance, What are the principal of that kind to which France should ascribe the diminution of her strength and wealth. What Patriotism is. How it may subsist, how it has been almost extinct among the French: how easily and speedily it may revive.

MY LORD,

AT the instant when I received the second with which your Lordship has honoured me, I had closed the answer which was due to the first. You will excuse my leaving the packet as it is, and only adding to it this short note, waiting for a letter, as

you desire. I am quite vain on having it thought by your Lordship, that I have some share in the secrets of the Cabinet. However, I have not the assurance to assume importance by revealing to your Lordship this morning what will be the subject of all the conversation in *Paris* this evening. Receive, my Lord, as ingenuously as I give it you, the news of the agreement of the Plenipotentiaries on the Preliminaries of Peace. Without some of those accidents which human prudence cannot foresee, the articles will be signed before the end of the day. If we are become, to our misfortune, an ambitious and conquering people, my Lord-Duke will have cut us out work; and he may say of this Treaty, with more reason than Cardinal *Mazarin* of that of the *Pyreneés*, that "he has sown abundantly for future ages." If we are, as I love to think, a wise and prudent people, we shall endeavour to choak those shoots of wars and victories, which other circumstances may dispose in such a manner as to produce us only disgrace and loss. The best of it is, that we have leisure to deliberate on this judicious operation. The machine is wound up in our happy country, to continue still for many years the same revolution of its wheels; on the contrary, with our rivals, it is

is so disordered and damaged, that its repairs are not the work of a single generation. This observation sets me right as to the question which your Lordship asked me, and which I endeavoured to answer in my letter. Recollect, my Lord, your political problem, and consider my endeavours on the subject less as a solution, than as some ideas which may help you to give one yourself.

“ *GREAT BRITAIN* does not occupy, at present, more room than she did a hundred years ago in the map of *Europe*. “ *France*, on the contrary, is increased and “ rounded by many considerable provinces “ and towns : yet, &c.”

YOUR Lordship is in the right not to be satisfied with the systematical politicians whom you have consulted on this revolution. Those gentlemen resemble the old-fashioned Philosophers, who thought they could find in the confusion of the Deluge the key of all the phænomena present and past. Historians of that universal crisis, of which they can give what particulars they please, without fearing detection, they boldly refer to it such extraordinary things as they will not examine or cannot fathom. I should be as fond of those Quacks, who fearing that minute discussions would betray their ignorance, set out every moment with the circulation of

the blood, and pretend that nothing more is to be asked of them, when they have alledged its disorder as the cause of the distemper, and its re-establishment as the object of their art. Our Politicians are sure to see or to shew luxury and wantonness in all the nations which have been populous, rich, and powerful; and they do not hesitate to alledge luxury and licentiousness of manners as the general principle of the ruin of Empires. They prolong, they shorten æras, as the Philosopher increases or diminishes the bulk and motion of the waters to which he refers the subject of his observation. They shun, like the Quack, the comparative facts which would embarrass them. After reading their sententious tales, we are only informed, that the State perished because its preservative principles were destroyed; and this we could very well have told ourselves, before we consulted them.

Luxury and licentiousness of manners are monsters in a State, I allow. But all monsters are not destructive; many of them are only remarkable animals. A man who has only common sense will not rank among possibilities a rich nation, which lives as if it were poor; and an enlightened and intelligent people, which has no more desires, no other pleasures, than a savage or ignorant people;

people ; because he will have studied his own heart and mind ; and thinking all other men formed nearly in the same mould as himself, he will take it for granted that they acquire only to enjoy, and that they enjoy what they have acquired much less than what remains to be acquired. The man who consults his reason, without enslaving it to a system, will have no idea of fixing the decline of a State immediately after the instant of its greatest prosperity : because he must have found more than once, that he is well without being so well as before, and that the moment when his health is best, is not therefore the moment when an illness must necessarily follow. The pretended sage reasons differently. He has fixed a point from which he sets out, and he brings every thing to that point, in spite of every thing that opposes his obstinacy. In vain you tell him that *Lacedæmon* preserved all the strength of her institution for many ages ; that two hundred years after *Julius Cæsar*, the *Roman* Empire was larger than under that Dictator ; that the Kings, who succeeded *Alexander*, adopted the vices of the *Persians* whose Empire they had overthrown ; and that they existed with these vices, these a longer, those a shorter time : in point of manners, the *Greeks*, in their most brilliant time, were no better than the *Persians* at the time of the fall of their Empire :

pire: that *Cæsar*, to whom the *Gauls* submitted, was a hundred times more dissolute than *Crassus*, whose defeat was a diversion to the *Parthians*: that these, plunged in luxury and effeminacy, made head, for many ages, against the *Roman* armies; while the *Gauls*, with their vigorous rusticity, held out only ten years against legions commanded by men immersed in luxury and debauchery. It is to no purpose to reason with those who never see more than they chuse to see. Recollect, my Lord, that Divine, who, confessing the revolution of the earth, did not therefore think the power of *Joshua* over the sun less respectable and true †.

† [If the author here means to insinuate, that the power of *Joshua* cannot possibly be reconciled with the motion of the earth, and that therefore this Divine was singularly absurd in pretending to believe them both, it may be proper to observe, that this miracle had just the same appearance, and the same effect, whether the sun, or the earth, stood still: and as the latter must, we suppose, have been the case, the day was by that means prolonged in the same manner as if the sun had been really in motion, and, at the command of *Joshua*, had ceased to move. The inspired writers never proposed to instruct their readers in astronomy, but in an easy and familiar manner adapted their narrations to such popular opinions as were then received. Thus we still talk of the rising and setting of the sun, though, strictly speaking, the earth, and not the sun, rises and sets.]

LET us consider luxury and licentiousness of manners as diseases in a rich and powerful State. But every disease is not mortal. Thus as a good Physician does not measure the danger of his patient merely by the nature of his distemper, the good Politician, who apprehends the interior construction and mechanism of a State, frequently sees only some necessary crises in those disorders where others think they see the symptoms of an approaching dissolution. States are compound bodies, which have all some small generical resemblances, and some specific differences which are essential. Hence some epidemical diseases which are common to them all, but by which every one of them is differently affected. A putrid fever, which soon carries to the grave the man whose habit is weak, or whose constitution is impaired by a bad regimen, will, with another of a strong habit, only restore his health by the melting, baking, and evacuation of the humours. It is said, that the luxury of the *Persians* delivered them up to the *Macedonians*, that *Carthage* perished for having united the spirit of conquests to that of commerce. That may be true, though I do not think that it is. But what is the inference? Are there not fifty soldiers who have only the scars of wounds.

wounds remaining, which have sent many others to the grave?

CHANCE, that is to say, a certain concurrence of circumstances, absolutely independent on our combinations, ought to be as much considered in the existence and manner of existing of States, as in the duration and prosperity of human life. *Lacedæmon* fell from her power under *Agesslaus*, one of her greatest Kings, because that Prince had for contemporaries *Epaminondas* and *Pelopidas*, whom he did not suspect to be capable of the great things which they performed. The *Darius's* might have filled the throne of *Cyrus* for many more ages, if *Macedonia* had produced her *Alexander* many ages later.

WHEN our *Edward III* victoriously overran the provinces of *France*, and when our *Henry V* repaired to *Paris* with the crown of *France* on his head, the *French* of those times were not *Persians*, any more than the *English* were *Macedonians*. Let us observe what was the strength of *France*, when the evil star of the first *Valois* had exhausted its malignant influence. How rapid was her recovery after the horrible convulsions into which the weakness of the last Kings of that branch had thrown her! How did she emerge, all at once, under the administration of Cardinal *de Richelieu*, from a faintness and languor of almost twenty years!

LET

LET us cast our eyes on *Great Britain*, and consider the *English* of *Edward II*, and of *Henry IV*, those of *Henry VIII*, and of the *Stuarts*. What politician on general principles will there discover the nation which *Edward III* made victorious, which *Henry VII* brought back to the love of her Kings, and of repose, to which *Elizabeth* gave a taste for commerce and religious toleration, which *Cromwell* infected with religious and political fanaticism, and which, at length, has risen, all at once, and by herself, to the true point of liberty which the Monarchical State allows? I infer from the subsequent history of people and of States, that to give a good reason of the ruin of those which are no longer in being, and to form a just presage of those which are, we must lay aside their generical resemblances, and search, with an indefatigable curiosity, into their specific differences. Those, only exhibit their outward form or figure: in these, we find their real constitution. The *Turks* and *Persians* are proud, voluptuous, dissolute; but differently from the *Moguls*. There are nearly the same manners, and the same luxury, in *Japan* as in *China*. Yet the *Chinese* are timid and cowardly, while the *Japanese* are fierce and courageous.

VENICE.

VENICE is again sunk into obscurity, without being able to impute it to her luxury and corruption of manners. *Sweden* cannot reproach with hers either of these assigned as general causes. *Germany* had still her ancient manners, and *Holland* had scarce lost any of the simplicity of hers, when *Lewis XIV* and his *French*, who were already refining on luxury and pleasure, carried the terror of their arms into the heart of their provinces. If the policy of the Monarch had been as bold as it was ambitious, if the *Marquess de Louvois* had chosen to wage war rather than to cherish and foment it, if he had chosen to conquer rather than to embroil, *Europe* would have been enchained by armies of Courtiers; while with as much courage and virtue as their descendants, our ancestors were kept in the basest stupefaction by a King whom they did not love, and whom they esteemed as little.

Who can doubt, that the *English* at that time were at a greater distance than we are at present, from the luxury and libertinism of our neighbours? We have had the happiness, in this war, to conquer the *French* in the four quarters of the world. Are they therefore *Persians*, and we *Macedonians*? It is very possible, that they may one day have their revenge, that they may repay and distress us
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in our Island. Will they therefore be *Romans*, and shall we be *Cartthaginians*? They, at present, indulge an immoderate luxury. We have our luxury, like them, and perhaps greater than theirs. They notify, as one may say, a contempt for manners. Certainly, it is an evil, and a very great one. But this excessive licentiousness has not yet infected the Provinces; and I do not think that, by opposing Capital to Capital, the parallel on that head would leave us much advantage; though it is far from being true, that the legislative power has the same facility with us as in *France* for a reformation. Shall we proceed, adhering to general principles, to seek their exception in our political and civil constitution? Then it must be allowed, that the same exceptions existed for the *French* eighty years ago, when more voluptuous and more debauched or dissolute than we, they triumphed over our forces combined with those of the rest of *Europe* united against them. Thus the principles will be relieved by their exceptions, and in the sequel will relieve them.

LUXURY impoverishes the individuals who give themselves up to it. But instead of diminishing the finances and population of the State, it multiplies the objects of labour and of receipt, it increases the public revenues,

nues, it cherishes artificans. Yet the expence has been the greatest inconvenience of this war to the King of *France*, and next to that, the want of men. What then becomes of our theorists, unless they recur to incidental causes, to some lucky combinations of chance in our favour?

I KNOW not how the generality of the *French* reason, who still to this hour obstinately persist in considering the revocation of the Edict of *Nantes*, and the persecutions which attended it, as a slight wound of no consequence. Perhaps they would not be quite mistaken, if the retreat of the *Huguenots* had been made like that of the *Moors* of *Spain* †. *France* would have lost only money and men, which to her would have been as if they had ceased to exist. But these men, transported with resentment, went over to her neighbours, and carried to them such of their effects as they could steal from her. Hence resulted a double loss: as there were a million of men, and many millions of gold, of which she no longer disposed, and which came to the disposal of her enemies. The

† [The *Moorish* government was finally overthrown in *Spain*, by the conquest of *Granada*, in 1492. But by the terms of the capitulation, the *Moors* were allowed the free exercise of their religion, with permission to live under their own laws.]

assistance which was given to the *French* Refugees in *England* and *Holland* was highly extolled. In fact, assistance was given them: there were some poor among them; and many of those who were not so, considering less what they had saved from their wreck than what they had lost there, did not refuse the liberality which prevented their wishes. But the politician does not regard any particular cash of the State with an eye of preference: it is from the flux and reflux of the circulation that he forms a just idea of the whole. It appears by the Registers of the *Tower of London*, that soon after the arrival of the first swarms of Refugees, more than a million of louis d'ors were melted down; and writers of credit have related, that, three years after the revocation of the Edict, it was difficult in *Holland* to get two and a half *per cent.* for money, which before was usually put out at four. Necessity, which was always the mother of industry, sharpened the genius and talents of those fugitives, and excited their courage to establish themselves in the places of their refuge: they all had the ambition of making themselves considerable in their new country, and regretted in their old one. Against this they raised their different batteries in favour of that. The artisan laboured in his occupation, the merchant was embold-
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ened to speculate, the manufacturer to undertake: the student redoubled his application, the officer gave himself up entirely to his profession. The establishments of *Colbert*, till then so lucrative, were copied abroad; and scarce affording any more supplies but to the pride and luxury of the Kingdom, they became at least unprofitable to the State. The knowledge of commerce, which prevailed in *France*, proceeded to unite itself among foreigners to that which was peculiar to them. They even appropriated to themselves the progress which the *French* had made beyond them in military affairs, in arts and sciences. *France* had already lost a very substantial part of her superiority, which neither she, nor those who were sharers with her, yet perceived. The arts and war had already deprived her country of numerous hands, but her Ministers had not yet paid the least attention to those two instruments of depopulation. All *Europe*, stirred up against her by *William III*, had united its forces for the humiliation of *Lewis XIV*, but the Cabinet of *Versailles* still sought to give him in the war the advantage of numbers. Without doubt, he had reason to seek and to flatter himself with it, before the union of the interested Princes and States. But when he had succeeded only in irritating
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those whom he ought to have crushed at the first blow, he could no longer pursue the same course without speedily bringing the Kingdom into a thorough decay: as he placed her population on a par with that of the States allied against *France*, while, in fact, it was as 1 to 3. Supposing that the losses in the last wars of *Lewis XIV* had been equal, the loss of *France* would still have been treble to that of her enemies; and this is a disadvantage from which she will not recover, as long as her Ministers shall continue the practice of stealing from population the numerous troops which a military life alienates in their own country. Calculate, my Lord, the subtraction which the forty last years of *Lewis XIV* made from the population of the preceding reigns by the constant support of between two and three hundred thousand men, the most robust and the best made in his Kingdom, devoted to celibacy. Recollect, in your calculation, that a hundred thousand men grown are the produce of a million of infants; you will find that it is not at all surprising that *France*, which had nineteen or twenty millions of inhabitants, under *Charles IX* ||, should scarce have sixteen

|| [See *Puffendorf's Introduction to the History of the World*, Chap. 5. on *France*. "It is the perpetual union of many little States," says *Montesquieu*, "that has produced this diminution. Formerly every village

or seventeen under *Lewis XV*, when she is one fourth larger. Your Lordship will no longer be reduced to the necessity of seeking for the causes of her depopulation in the abyss of cloisters and the licentiousness of manners. Those two causes will seem to you no more than accessaries.

In like manner, let us enter into the accidental revolutions with regard to the finances. Few of the *French* judge rightly of our national debt, because they see it in the same point of view as their own, and are assisted, by their prejudices, to found on the future their observations on the present. They refuse to see that we are actually in the enjoyment of our loans, while they having no longer any part of theirs, are in the grievous crisis of re-imbursements and retrieving. We are the high and mighty Lord who spends undauntedly the income of his estate; our rivals are the descendants of such a Lord, who have the remembrance remaining of the magnificence of their grandfather to console them for the burthens which his

“ large in *France* was a Capital; at present, there is
 “ only one large one: every part of the nation was the
 “ centre of power; at present, every thing refers to
 “ a centre; and that centre is, if I may so say, the
 “ nation herself.”

Spirit of Laws, Ch. 24.]

mortgages

mortgages have left them. A speculative Politician § has pointed out to our creditors the hopes of our posterity on the side of *Indostan* as their best security. With whatever view he may communicate this idea, we hazard nothing in adopting it, in order to make us easy as to the fate of our descendants. A trading nation may conquer the Empire of the *Mogul* more usefully, and by more noble and more innocent methods, than the *Spaniards* the Empire of the *Incas* and that of the *Caciques*. The generality of the *French* are fond of concealing from themselves that our creditors are now making a common cause with us, that their interest urges them to patience, complaisance, generosity towards us. They also love to compare *Great Britain* with *France* by the old proportion of one to three. But you, my Lord, who are sensible that our population has increased more than a fifth, while hers has diminished as much, you, who are sensible, that our paper-money has added a fifth to the mass of specie which we have in circulation, know, that our situation giving us an equality of strength to the *French*, with a supply of men but half as great as theirs, it is evident that, in this

§ *Considerations du Docteur Manlover sur la Paix générale.* A *Stutgard*, 1762. See Vol. I. p. 47.

war, *Great Britain*, as powerful as *France*, has been, once at least, richer. Thus *France* finds in her coffers the void which the sums devoured by the war have made there: instead of which, *Great Britain*, who has drawn the Capitals from her paper-mine, has transferred to her Records the burthen which is known without being felt, and only sees the annual interest of those Capitals, with the price of exchange for *Germany*, issue from her coffers, both together making scarce the fifteenth part of those Capitals.

GIVE US, in this war, some Ministers less daring, whose affection and views should be equally divided between the present and future generations, you will take away this merely accidental disparity. Our efforts by sea and land, calculated by our revenues, and by the advances which an ordinary credit procures, will no longer have the same superiority over the efforts of the *French*. Our military operations will, on account of our expences, be reduced to less than one half of what they have been: our factitious wealth no longer changing the real state of the two Monarchies, the last years of the war, conducted with the same sagacity and the same patriotism, will, at most, only balance the bad success of the first. Your Lordship must allow that nothing was less suitable to the
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the *British* constitution than that successful boldness of the last Ministry; that chance and fortune never, perhaps, had any thing which they could challenge so completely, as the complaisance of Parliament, and the tractableness of the *English* people, to the powerful genius which subjected them on that occasion.

You tell me, my Lord, that the *French* themselves, whom you have seen at *London*, complain that "there is among them, in the whole machine of Government, active and passive, a considerable disorder, which denotes, if not the total ruin, at least, a great relaxation of the main springs." I agree with them. But the point is, to find the faulty or disordered parts. The people, who do not reason on these high subjects, would, perhaps, guess rightly on that head, if they were left to their instinct. Every one else reasons much upon it, and is mistaken. The most ignorant man, if he is unprejudiced, is a much better judge of the disorder which he feels, than the most intelligent of the disorder which he occasions. The Parliaments, which now make in *France* a much greater figure than they ever made there, affirm that every thing would go on better, if they had more influence and authority in Government. The Clergy demand, on the same pretence,

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the tyranny which they formerly exercised. The Nobility lament their having no more than a small part of their ancient prerogatives, and their being obliged to share what remains of them with a multitude of upstarts, whose pride exasperates them to a ruinous emulation, and whose wealth mortifies them. That numerous part of the nation which composes an Order between the Nobility and the people, which might in Finance be called the Nation itself, that class of men who so well deserve the name of *easy* by the taste for *ease*, which is their only passion, propose every thing which seems to employ their faculties, to retrench their superfluities, and to disturb them in the enjoyment of all the conveniences of life. The lazy opulence of the Clergy, the burthensome inutility of Cloisters, the ostentatious profusion of the Financiers, the losses of trade, the misery of the country, are by turns the subjects of their declamations and complaints. They all, my Lord, are mistaken. They resemble a speculative planter, who should promise himself, for his attention to the boughs and branches, a cure of the malady which has affected the root and heart of the tree. I have pleasure in referring you, for an instance, to our dear *England*. As much parity as there may be with *Great Britain*, I will venture to say that

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we might as justly have been reproached, in 1756, for what the *French* are reproached now. Why have we been ever since 1758 so superior to what we were in 1756? Because, by a revolution for ever memorable, patriotism exalted herself, on a sudden, in every heart and in every mind, and from that *sublimated* patriotism a new humour was formed, which gave a new soul and a new life to the Monarchy. Restore patriotism to the *French*, and they will say nothing more, either of their Parliaments, whose department ought to be confined to the administration of Justice, or of their Clergy, whose opulence has never been more laborious, or of their Cloisters, which have never been less destructive, or of the Financers, whose excesses authority can so easily punish and correct; or, in short, of all the other evils, which only threaten to destroy the boughs and branches, because the tree is affected at the heart and at the root.

THERE is an old error which measures patriotism by the liberty of the people. What a deception! Monarchy, or Republic, every State, which is not absolutely democratical, has its chiefs, whose authority is absolute. The *Turkish* Sultan in his Divan is not more despotic than our Parliament at *Westminster*. What signifies, to those who must obey, the

number of masters who command them? The Citizen of *York*, or of *Gloucester*, has no more real share in an Act of Parliament than the Citizen of *Paris* in an Ordinance of the Court of *Versailles*. The patriotism of the people therefore does not depend on the degree of authority ascribed to the Sovereign. If your Lordship should ask for examples, I would desire you to observe what were the slavery and patriotism of the *Spartans*: I would exhort you to consider, on one side, *Russia* and *Denmark* governed by legal Despots; and, on the other, *Sweden* and *Poland*, where the authority of the Sovereigns is so limited. Patriotism is a factitious affection, consequently subordinate to that which is innate. All reasoners agree in acknowledging that the latter is single, and that in man it is self-love. There will therefore be patriotism wherever men annex their welfare to the welfare of their country; and this patriotism will exalt itself in proportion to the success with which those who govern, know how to unite, blend, confound these two ideas in the mind. Absolute Monarchical Government is more or less distant from its perfection, according as the *identity* of the Monarch and Monarchy is more or less existent. This *identity* cannot be destroyed in the minds of the people, without reducing the Monarch to the alternative,

tive, of being either a titular chief and a mere representative, or of becoming a master little beloved, if he knows how to make himself obeyed. We see both these at home, in *Sweden*, and in *Poland*. The Kings of *Great Britain* have avoided the precipice by a prodigy: the *English* are the only people in the world who have been so moderate and so judicious, as not extravagantly to extend to Royalty their just resentment against their Kings. The *Stuarts* were desirous of being more in *Great Britain* than *Elizabeth* had been: they broke the community in which they were with the State: they pretended to be superior to it, and shewed that they were different. The nation, awakened by their usurpations, saw, as it were, a duel: she took part with the champion of the State, and would have the Kings submit to her, tired, as they were, of dividing with her the obedience of the people. If King *William* had not seasonably interfered in the revolution which was inevitable, the *Stuarts* would have determined the fate of their successors; and those Princes would have been no more than Personages of State. § *Charles XI*, King of *Sweden*, overthrew the relations established

§ [This King reigned from 1660 to 1697. He acquired absolute power in 1682.]

by the first † *Gustavus*, preserved and increased by § *Gustavus Adolphus*, and first infringed by * *Charles Gustavus*. He was master of *Sweden*, of which he was born King. His son, *Charles XII*, who succeeded him, went still beyond him. This Prince had not even the idea that the affection and obedience of the *Swedes* should have any other object than his person; your Lordship knows that he went so far as to say that "he would make himself represented on his throne at *Stockholm* by one of his boots." The State, stifled during the life of this imprudent Monarch, appeared with fresh vigour after his death. It has now scarce left the King an honorary existence. I shall never forget one particular of King ‡ *Frederick Adolphus* of *Hesse*. As he was one day walking in his garden

† [*Gustavus Vasa*, or *Ericson*, who, in 1522, obtained the Crown by his valour, and rescued the nation from slavery by his perseverance in virtue and patriotism.]

§ [This great Prince, the darling of his subjects, the terror of the House of *Austria*, and the admiration of *Europe*, was killed at the battle of *Lutzen* in 1622. He was succeeded by his daughter *Christina*.]

* [*Charles XI*. *Charles X*, his father, who succeeded Queen *Christina*, is more generally known by the name of *Charles Gustavus*.]

‡ [This Prince was associated in the government by his Queen, sister and successor to *Charles XII*. He was succeeded by the Bishop of *Lubeck*, the late King.]

with

with the Chancellor of the Kingdom and the Ambassador of *France*, the latter observed to his Majesty that 'much more advantage might be made of that ground.' The King said that "he was sensible of it, that he was also dissatisfied with his gardener, and had thoughts of discarding him, in order to take another." 'Ah, Sire!' interrupted the Chancellor, 'God forbid that your Majesty should discard from your service a man whom the Senate has given you!' † *Sigismund III*, who was the first in *Poland* that suffered the interests of the King to be separated from those of the Republic, forged the fetters of his successors. In consequence, matters came to such a pass, that his son, who filled the throne after him, was, in many respects, in a worse condition than his first subjects. Once when he declared his intention of going, for his health, to the baths of *Bobemia*, he had the mortification to find an opposition formed to his journey which he could not overcome.

UNDER the reign of *Lewis XIII* in *France*, arbitrary power made itself felt by several Orders of the Kingdom in its most oppressive form. But an able Minister gave them these

† [This Prince died in 1629, after gaining and losing the two Crowns of *Russia* and *Sweden*.]

blows for the King in the name of the State. The continual wars had, for their cause or pretext, the liberty, the independence, the honour, the advancement of *France*. The interior tranquillity was a pretence for humiliating the *Grandeess*, and despising the claims of the great bodies. The levies of money appeared destined to provide for the public necessities which required them. All that related to the King was placed to the account of the State. The people groaned, because they were in pain. But like the patient whom the bitterness of the draughts only puts for some moments out of humour with the physician, they imputed their sufferings to the necessity of circumstances; and the hope of hastening, by fresh efforts, such events as were able to make their condition better, animated their zeal and supported their courage. The habit of these dispositions was disordered by the factious rivals of the good fortune of *Mazarin*. But the civil war was only a cloud, which eclipsed for some time the regal authority, without impairing it. The best heads which remained attached to the Court, preserved entirely the identity of the King and the State; and the people, by paying obedience to the former, were persuaded that, by withdrawing themselves from it, they had failed essentially in that which they owed
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the latter. When *Lewis XIV* began to reign by himself, he found the nation tired of being governed by a woman and a priest, and carelessly playing with her yoke. She was enamoured of her young King before she was acquainted with him. She did not dissemble that the Royalty, in his person, had much more extended rights than the precarious authority of the Queen-Regent and the Minister; she was not disposed to cavil with him. The Kingdom was augmented; it was natural for the Court to become more brilliant. The last wars had been successful; there was no fear of its engaging in new. Numerous armies rejoiced the Nobility without afflicting the people; those found in them only exercise and employment; these did not yet perceive their depopulation. Those brave Commanders, who, with small armies, had done great things, promised success and glory. The Statesmen, who were formed in difficult and tempestuous times, seemed to insure to the Cabinet the superiority of measures. All, in short, went well; and they thought they could not alter it, but for the better: they would absolutely alter it.

WHAT a noble career for the young Monarch, if in indulging his ambition as much as *Francis I*, he had observed to his people the language of *Henry IV*! But flattery gave

a different turn to that greatness of soul and pride which were in his character. He had no other sentiments for his subjects than for foreigners: he seemed to taste no pleasure but that of commanding; he inspired respect, admiration, fear, and seemed little to concern himself with deserving love and affection †. The Abbé *Furetiere* was rallied without mercy, for having, in his dedication of his Dictionary, assured the Monarch that he was *his most affectionate subject*; and the author was quite astonished that the public voice was for branding the expression with indecorum, and for banishing it from the language; as if a homage the most worthy of a Sovereign, the father of his people, degraded the rank of *Lewis XIV*!

It was not till after the Treaties of *Ryswick* that the dreadful consequences of an adoration so little calculated for good Kings were perceived. A peace begged, and purchased at the price which the enemies of *France* chose to make her pay, put an end to

† [Soon after the death of *Lewis XIV*, the following Epitaph, in allusion to his body having been embowelled, as usual, before its interment, was fixed upon the *Pont Neuf*:

*C'y git Louis Quatorze,
Sans cœur et sans entrailles,
Tel qu'il étoit à Versailles.]*

a war which the most brilliant success should, one would have thought, have terminated differently. She had had great victories, she had hoped for conquests; yet she made restitutions. The nation, till then infatuated with the glory of the King and the State, was enraged at having ineffectually lavished her blood and treasure. After murmuring against the caprice to which she ascribed that disadvantageous peace, she began to suspect that the Court had been induced to it rather by weakness than by weariness or disgust; and she had soon a glimpse of those wounds which enthusiasm had prevented her from perceiving. According to custom, she exaggerated the misfortune. As she only adhered to the King by the fanaticism of ambition, the relation ceased with its principle. Every one made the good of the State consist in his own private welfare, and began by degrees to consider the Monarch separately, as he seemed to feel for the interest of the latter less than indifference. The taxes levied in the King's name were no longer paid to the State: they were not paid to the King, but with reluctance, as to an unmerciful Financer, who only loves his estate for the revenues which it brings him. The King was considered as a haughty Lord, no less indifferent to the welfare of his vassals, than attentive and rigorous as to the rights

rights of his Lordships. The declaration of war for the *Spanish* succession finished the revolution. That war, for which *Lewis* did not endeavour to obtain the consent of the State, whose interest he consulted less than that of his family, absolutely cooled the minds of the Public as to military glory. It appeared what it was, a war personal to the Monarch. The people submitted to contributions as to jobs which they dared not refuse: they obeyed by the habit which they had of obeying. They depended on gaining nothing and losing much, whatever might be the success of his Majesty's arms. The nation would have been almost indifferent as to the event, if she could have flattered herself that the victorious enemy would not have extended to her his jealousy and resentment against the King. *Lewis XIV* was sensible of the revolution, without well understanding it. The step which he took, after the breaking off of the conferences of *Gertruydenberg* †, has been criticised, when communicating to his people the insults which he had suffered from his enemies, he endeavoured to interest the honour of the nation in revenging them. This step would have been a master-stroke of good policy, if it had been supported. But

† [In 1709.]

it was not well considered. The King thought that he had only emulation to excite, and zeal to inflame; while he had affection and patriotism, absolutely extinguished, to rekindle. This measure therefore occasioned only a slight convulsion, after which the nation relapsed into coldness and indifference.

EVER since the beginning of this century, my Lord, the State has been no more in *France* than a phantom quoted at every turn to the vulgar, and reckoned as nothing by those who are not the vulgar. Excepting a small number of superior men, of those men whom the good genius of Empires always keeps in reserve for their preservation or establishment, every *Frenchman* is accustomed to consider the Court and the King no more than he does himself. He honours the Monarch, as a master whom he must fear; if he loves his person, it is by abstracting it from his rank: he hates the Courtiers, as hornets whose greediness ruins him; he judges of the state of public affairs by that of his private affairs. The Courtier, on his side, thinks neither of the public good, nor of the service of the King: totally absorbed by his fortune, he says to himself that he shall make it more certainly by favour than by his own merit. He who commands in chief, in whatever department it be, wishes to have
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only to obey, in order that his punctuality may be acknowledged, and that he may not be responsible for events. He who aspires to the command, makes it his chief business to cultivate his protectors and protectresses: he is not solicitous about performing great and noble actions; it is sufficient for him to avoid exposing himself to those that are bad. He would risk every thing, if he was bold; he has every thing to hope, if he is cautious. Your Lordship will apprehend what influence such a system must have on war, and that there is scarce occasion for more than that to produce that apparent decline on which we congratulate ourselves. But, at the same time, you cannot fail to observe that a new war between the two Powers is able of itself alone to bring back our rivals to their former way of thinking. The present Ministry are thoroughly in the way to it; and it will not be their fault if the *French* nation be not soon convinced that she must contend with us for her liberty and her existence. If they should succeed, I fancy, my Lord, that we shall have more trouble in parrying the back-stroke, than we had in winning the game. But, as I have had the honour to tell you, we have time before us.

I am, &c.

LET-

L E T T E R XXXI.

TO THE EARL OF B.

Reflections on the little thanks that will be given to Lord B. in England for the Peace. That he must wait for it. Discourse in which it is proved that the successes of the war were the consequences of an accidental situation. State of the Courts of Europe in 1756. State of that of London. State of Holland, of Denmark, of Poland, of Russia, of the Germanic body, of the Court of Vienna, of that of Versailles. State of Spain and Italy. How much all this disposition is changed.

MY LORD,

RECEIVE my congratulations on the Peace: it is your Lordship's work, and you ought to applaud yourself for it. But I doubt that, for some years, you will have no recompence for it, but that of a patriot, to whom the consciousness of his patriotism is sufficient. I prophecy, my Lord, that you and your coadjutors will have pretty much the same fate as the promoters of the Peace of *Utrecht*. The people of *England* will obstinately

obstinately persist in considering less what they gain than what they have paid; and they will reproach your Lordship with the loss of the conquests which they do not keep. The party of the old Ministry are in haste to increase these clamours, in order, if they can, to stifle yours on the exhausted state into which they have brought the nation. The displaced Ministers will pretend to regret the place in which they found themselves much embarrassed, and which they would have vacated themselves if they had dared. Lastly, *Great Britain* will be fond of imputing to you the weakness which must necessarily result from her violent convulsion, and of thinking that the Empirics who supported her in the one would have preserved her from the other.

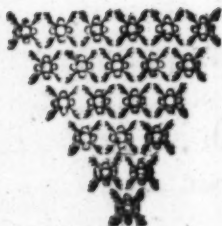
THREE or four years after the Peace of *Ryswick*, all *France* exclaimed that her warlike King had made that Treaty many years too late: Yet at the time of its publication the people refused to rejoice at it. It is true that the Monarch, every where victorious, had treated as if he had been vanquished, and that, contrary to custom, the amends had been made to the conquered. But he was sensible that his own successes had nearly ruined him. Your antagonists, my Lord, would be very modest, if the people of *Eng-*
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land should oblige them to say how they intended to raise the supplies for two or three years more of war. For three years they had regularly borrowed every year twelve millions sterling, for which they created new paper. Would they dare to reply that the same mine would have supplied them with thirty more, without this violent explosion occasioning a downfall? They will exclaim against your Lordship, that is certain, for they are men of genius and abilities; and you wish them no harm, because you are equitable. A Statesman has a licence to lie to his party. In their place, you would act like them; and in yours, they would have patience.

BEING, as I am, at your Lordship's devotion, I exhort you, my Lord, to imitate Sir *Robert Walpole* in his generosity to the writers whose pen is calculated for the *English* people. Give them for a text, that it is not to a real superiority of our troops and resources, together with those of our glorious ally, that we are indebted for the advantages of our arms and of his; but only to a singular concurrence of circumstances, of which the King of *Prussia* has enabled us to avail ourselves with him. The small Pamphlet, which I annex to this letter, may explain my idea. If I am mistaken, its brevity will induce

you to forgive my pilfering the time which you will bestow on the perusal. I shall repair to *London* according to your Lordship's invitation, as soon as I have got rid of a sort of fit which I have had of the gout in my right foot. My Physician assures me that it will only last a week.

I am, &c.



STATE

S T A T E
O F T H E
COURTS O F EUROPE
IN 1756 AND 1762.

TILL the end of the year 1755, *England*, who was desirous of terminating the difficulty, which the Commissaries eternised, concerning the * navigation of the *Ohio* and the limits of *Acadia*, had no settled plan of operations. The *French* sent reinforcements

* [This expression seems deficient in point of precision. The *navigation* of the *Ohio*, if it be navigable, considered by itself, is of little consequence. But the fertile countries which that river washes, and the chain of forts which the *French* were erecting from the *St. Lawrence* to the *Mississippi*, were of the utmost. The limits of *Canada* and of *Louisiana*, as well as of *Acadia*, were, properly speaking, the matter in dispute.]

to that continent, and were preparing some more considerable. The Duke of *Cumberland*, who both thought and hoped that this war, with which *America* was threatened, would not communicate itself to *Europe*†, gave orders for hostilities against the forts on the borders of *Canada*‡. The *English* were superior in numbers; it was natural to think that, by acting with vigour, they would stifle the quarrel. It happened otherwise: it is a contingency which must be placed to the account of fortune, or of fatality. The supineness, in which *England* kept her Marine till *May* 1756, is sufficient to prevent her being charged with the project of drawing the contagion of the *American* war into *Europe*.

THE *British* Ministry, at the end of 1755, still adhered to their old connections with the Court of *Vienna*: they were so desirous of strengthening them, and of entering into new engagements with her, that, in *December* the same year, they concluded a Treaty of alliance and of subsidy with *Russia*, whose Sove-

† [“ So complicated,” says *Voltaire*, “ are the political interests of the present times, that a shot fired “ in *America* shall be the signal for setting all *Europe* “ together by the ears.”]

‡ [The Duke of *Cumberland*'s instructions were found among Gen. *Braddock*'s papers, and were published by the *French*.]

reign seemed resolved to make a common cause with the Empress-Queen. The clamours of a powerful cabal delayed the ratification of that Treaty, in which, among other articles, it was stipulated that "the Court of *Petersburgh* should be contented with an annual subsidy of five hundred thousand pounds sterling, though insufficient for the support of the army which she promised, and that, because the Imperial army of *Russia*, entering on action, would immediately find itself in an enemy's country, where its subsistence would cost it nothing, or next to nothing." This was threatening the King of *Prussia* with an invasion pretty plainly. The Monarch had not forgotten the trick which had been played him, in 1744, by the resentment of the Court of *Versailles*†: he feared not being sincerely seconded by her in this new war; and he did not hesitate to lay the storm on the side which he conceived to be the most dangerous. The *Russian* armies, always formidable, would have had a much greater vivacity, if their military chest drew its supplies from *England*, than if it was confined to the recruits furnished by *Austria* and

† [The *French*, according to their contract with the King of *Prussia*, should have attempted to hinder Prince *Charles* of *Lorraine* from repassing the *Rhine*; instead of which, they gave him very little disturbance.]

France.

France. The House of *Brunswick* and the Landgrave of *Hesse* were the allies of the King of *England*, as the King-Elector of *Saxony* was of the Empress-Queen. On wishing for a junction with *France*, his *Prussian* Majesty found himself furrounded by enemies, whom a small number of marches brought upon his frontiers, as he could not doubt that the *Swedes* would take the part which the Empress of *Russia* should advise them. Allowing the *French* all their activity, he could neither flatter himself, nor require of them, that having the finest theatres of war open in the *Low Countries* and on the *Rhine*, they would come and establish it in the deserts of *Westphalia*, and among the mountains of *Hesse*. It was not the interest of *France* to contribute, nor even consent, to the aggrandisement of the *Prussian* power; nor was it more her interest to annihilate it, till she should have in the Empire an Electoral House so indifferent as to the House of *Austria*, as to see the *Germanic* constitution in its connections with her. In a word, the King of *Prussia* could only regard his Most Christian Majesty as a frigid ally and a weak enemy. That Monarch knew the sensibility of *George II* for his *German* dominions, and the complaisance of his *Britannic* Majesty's Council for that predilection. No great effort of logic and eloquence was necessary

cessary to prove, at St. *James's*, that the invasion of *Hanover* was much nearer, and more formidable, on the side of *Prussia*, than on that of *France*, both being enemies to the King-Elector. At the very time when a powerful cabal, in opposition to continental subsidies, gave the most uneasiness and embarrassment to the *English* Ministers, *Frederick* made them an offer of being the protector of the peace of the Empire, and of engaging to oppose, with all his forces, the entrance of all foreign troops whatever into *Germany*. How came *George II* not eagerly to embrace an offer which equally freed him from the subsidies to *Russia*, and from the hostilities of *France* and *Prussia* against his Electorate? The Courts of *London* and *Berlin* treated on the conditions which the latter chose, who, forming a vast plan, did not trifle about any small objects. The stipulations were vague: it was said that the guaranty of the peace in *Germany* was the only matter in debate. However, the refusal of the Kings-Electors to include the *Austrian Netherlands* in their guaranty convinced the Empress Queen that their Majesties had little regard for her interests, and *France*, that they were willing to secure themselves a passage to her. Contrary to all appearance, present interest prevailed, in the Courts of *Versailles* and *Vienna*, over their
ancient

ancient enmities. One hour's deliberation annihilated the arguments of more than two centuries: the Treaty of *Versailles* united *France* and *Austria*. The accession of *Russia* and *Sweden* to that alliance was so natural, that one cannot help laughing at those men of importance who make a merit of contriving it.

In the ordinary course of things, those Treaties of *London* and *Versailles* must have maintained peace in *Europe*; and, probably, that course would not have been interrupted, if, immediately after their Treaty, the King of *France* and the Empress-Queen had taken, with that expedition which characterises resolution, proper measures to seem certain of sustaining the shock, or able to prevent it. The two parties were respectively restrained by fear. What the power of the four allied Courts threw into the scale, in their favour, was counter-balanced by the *British* opulence, and by the actual state of the *Prussian* forces. The King of *Prussia* could enter into action, and strike the greatest blows, whenever he pleased. Instead of which, the four great allies were obliged to concert and combine together their operations. This would have been nothing, if their armies, assembled and complete in all respects, had only been detained by waiting for cabinet-couriers. But the

the Empress-Queen, many months after the signing of the Treaty of *Versailles*, had not collected together thirty thousand regular troops. *France*, always so well prepared to receive her enemy on her frontier, was by no means prepared to go in quest of him at a hundred leagues distance, through mountainous and barren countries. The *Russians*, who had all *Poland* to traverse, appointed the time for their arrival. The little harmony between the Senate and Court of *Stockholm* rendered a *Swedish* army much less dangerous in the field than it was formerly. At length, the Court of *Versailles* seemed willing to adhere to the articles of her Treaty, by giving the Empress-Queen only the twenty-four thousand men promised, and by waiting the events of a war in which the *Germans* would tear each other to pieces. It was evident that the King of *Prussia* would not be restrained by the consideration of the real superiority of the four Powers, as soon as they seemed blind to the danger of being out-stripped by his celerity. Some rich and prudent gamesters impose on the boldest gamester, when they seem resolved to tire his good luck by their patience. But if they discover ever so little fear, he threatens every moment to play his last stake, and it is certain that they will get into a scrape.

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As

As it is no longer disputed, who was the aggressor in this war, since the Kings of *France* and *Spain* founded their declaration of war against *Portugal* on the same reasons that the King of *Prussia* gave for his invasion of *Saxony*; it may be allowed that his *Prussian* Majesty took the field, and began his career, before they began with him. Whether that Monarch was justified in it, or not, by the principles of *Grotius* and *Puffendorf*, is a matter of absolute indifference. I know not from whence those Teachers derived their powers to arrogate to themselves legislation among Sovereigns. All that is of importance to be known by those, who are fond of knowing and estimating the men of their own times, is, whether prudence suggested to the King of *Prussia* the invasion of *Saxony*, and whether she encouraged him in the confidence which he seemed to have in his power to support it. This discussion places his reputation, as an able politician, in the fairest light. The speculatists, who proclaimed, in a prophetic style, that he would sink under it, either did not see, or dared not be thought to see, a train of circumstances, an accidental situation, no part of which had escaped him. He had studied the States whom he provoked, and the men of the Cabinet whom they had to oppose to him, as an able Commander studies

dies the theatre of the war which he would wage, and the genius of the Generals who are sent against him. To account for the events and the marvellous conclusion of this war, we will now examine the machine of which the Monarch had considered the springs, and conjectured the possible play, at the moment of his rupture.

THE *British* Ministry then in power displayed little boldness and resolution. The people of *England* were full of ardour and resentment. A man of a genius and courage equally ardent vigorously contended with the Ministers: he had the esteem and affection of the people. He was a more strenuous advocate for war even than the Court. But he displeased the Court by his opposition to the means and the manner of conducting that war. Sooner or later, he could not but force the Court to employ him; since it was only by having him on her side, that she could hope to be seconded by the nation. Whatever might then have been his ideas as to the connection of *Great Britain* with the Continent, it might be taken for granted that he would make them bend to circumstances, when being above the shame of inconsistency, and having no more need of opposition to enhance his own value, he could have no resources, but success, to support his credit at

Court, his esteem with the people. To engage him was the whole affair; and this might easily be insured, as soon as he was convinced that the *French* Marine being unable long to resist the *British*, *France* would turn against the three Kingdoms, and employ in an invasion, the forces which she was not obliged to use on the Continent. Mr. *Pitt*, being once engaged, must draw with him the Court and the people, and go as far as the Monarch allied with *England* could wish. It was a work of time, and of events, to extend the articles of the alliance, and to establish a community of fortune between the two Powers. To be easy as to the employment of the naval forces, it was sufficient that the people of *England* had turned their hopes on that side.

THE Republic of the United Provinces having her Stadtholder a minor; a Princess, daughter of *George II*, being at the head of affairs, a Prince of the House of *Brunswick*† having the command of the army, the States-General not being able to let slip the advantages of the neutrality which would throw all commerce into the hands of their subjects, the people of the Seven Provinces being confirmed in their taste for peace by the fear of

† [Duke Lewis of *Brunswick*.]

the expences of war; that powerful State was reckoned as nothing in the crisis.

DENMARK, beginning to enjoy commerce and arts under a reign remarkably attentive to the internal administration, seemed to promise to require nothing more of the contending parties than a respect for her neutrality. An old enemy of the *Suedes*, she took care not to enter into an engagement to enable them to recover their ancient possessions. Justly attentive to the influence of the *Russians* in *Germany*, she was very far from wishing to contribute to increase it. Too powerful to apprehend any thing from the House of *Brunswick*; always disposed to be uneasy at a *Prussian* invasion of the Dutchy of *Mecklenburgh*; too badly seconded, in all her wars, by the Princes and States of the Empire, to offer to protect or revenge them, she had no reason to apprehend any troublesome diversion during the war, whatever were its consequences; and in case of misfortunes, she was a mediatress, a peacemaker, able to command attention.

POLAND, given up to a real anarchy under the monstrous name of a Monarchical Republic, without troops, without fortifications, without finances, equally open to the *Russians* and *Prussians*, indifferent to them both, as well as to her King, was only confi-

derable by her extent and fertility. His *Prussian* Majesty saw what supplies she could afford him for the subsistence of his armies; how many obstacles, with some money and much intrigue, she could oppose to the subsistence of the *Russian* armies in their march; how easily the armies of *Russia* would fall back on those plentiful countries, when they approached the sands of *Brandenburgh*; with how many reasons and pretences that difference of soil would furnish their Generals to take up their winter quarters early, and to quit them late. For it cannot be doubted that the Monarch had already improved, at the Imperial Court of *Petersburgh*, the intelligence of which there was a conviction after the death of the Empress *Elizabeth*.

THAT Princess had been attacked, for many years, by a disease which art declared incurable. Her Court was divided, as it happens, in the like case, in all Courts, between the reigning Empress and her successor. The Prince was enraged at having so little share in business. Easily liable to be prejudiced, and obstinate in his prejudice, he had no regard but for those who adopted, or appeared entirely to adopt, his ideas. Every thing being transacted in the Cabinet either against his will, or without his concurrence, it was very natural for him

him to thwart the execution, as far as he was able, especially if he was prejudiced against the general plan; and that was his disposition as to every thing that clashed with the interests of the King of *Prussia*. He proved, by his fall from the throne, that his abilities were very confined, and that, transported by his temper into extremes, he little considered them before he espoused them. Can there be any doubt that this Prince was perfectly known to his *Prussian* Majesty, and that, employing his penetration to preface what he might expect from him, he flattered himself with placing and keeping him in the best situation to make him useful? It may be deemed a fact that, before he entered on action, the King of *Prussia* was sure of profiting by the alliance of his enemies with *Russia*. It is difficult to know which most to admire, the good fortune of the Monarch, which procured him this intelligence, or his address in preventing the allied Crowns from having any more than the suspicion of it. But still it is certain that if he had only had that accidental situation of the Imperial Court of *Russia* in his favour, his confidence in provoking the four allied Powers would have been no more than a noble boldness. He might, probably, hope to be apprised of the projects and plans of military operations

which the four Courts would communicate to each other; and being certain of never marching, or fighting, without some view, of disconcerting his enemies, for the whole campaign, by beginning it on a plan different from theirs, of parrying, in short, on the most dangerous side, the passes of genius and fortune, he might, with fewer forces, depend on being always superior. The diversion, with which *Sweden* threatened him, he made a matter of amusement. Who knew better than he, that neither the Court nor the Senate of *Stockholm* thought of making conquests, that the first wished him no harm, and that the second could do him none?

WITH the certainty of having the Emperor and the Empire against him, and of furnishing new grievances to the principal guarantee of the peace of *Westphalia*, the sudden invasion of *Saxony* might, perhaps, at another time, have been the highest degree of rashness. But what was then the state of *Germany*? The Elector of *Saxony* had not then fifteen thousand soldiers on foot. His Ministry were hated, his coffers were empty. The troops which the Elector of *Bavaria* kept in pay did not amount to eight thousand men. His Ministers, desirous of giving him an aversion for war, were sure of succeeding in it, by reminding him of what
his

his country suffered in the last. They were so strenuous for oeconomy, that it might be foreseen that they would cavil, in the Diet, as to the contingent of the Prince their master. The Elector-*Palatine*, without particular connections with *Saxony*, and without any views of aggrandisement, declared that he would take no part in the quarrel, if he was not forced to it. There are, in Courts, some recollections and resentments which are never extinguished. The *Palatine* family will always regard *Saxony* with indifference, on account of the misfortunes of the † Elector-King of *Bohemia* in the last century. The three Ecclesiastical Electors, nearly alike disordered in their finances, did not threaten to interest themselves more strongly in favour of the invaded State. From their pacific character, it might, on the contrary, be inferred, that being deluded by the hope of sooner restoring peace by gentle measures, they would offer themselves for mediators in the Diet, and, with the best intentions, would ward the vigorous.

† [Son-in-law to our *James I*, Elector-*Palatine*, &c. *John-George*, Elector of *Saxony*, under pretence of assisting the Head of the Empire against his rebellious subjects, in 1620, invaded and conquered *Lusatia*, and exercised great cruelties on the inhabitants.

See Univ. Mod. Hist. Vol. XI. p. 203.]

blows which the Imperial authority might be tempted to strike. The zeal of Protestantism, which was said to be threatened with ruin by the Courts of *Versailles*, *Vienna*, and *Dresden*, was equivalent to the affection of the rich Imperial Cities. It was unquestionable that, if the *Germanic* body should openly take a part, it would be with regret; that its army, composed of contingents, would with as much ease be checked and defeated, as it would with difficulty be assembled and conducted; and that it would afford a martial reason for incursions infinitely more advantageous than the expence of the body of troops which would oppose it.

He ran no hazard of being mistaken in calculating the strength of the Imperial authority by the strength of that army of the Empire. The more reasons the Emperor had to favour the Empress-Queen, the more certain it was that he would act with circumspection against the enemies of that Princess become the enemies of the Empire. His dignity prescribed to him less severity, that he might not be accused of partiality. His interest, entirely distinct from that of the Empress his wife, subjected him, it may be said, to the deliberations of the *Germanic* body, frequently obviated, and always conquered by his predecessors. *Ferdinand, Leopold,*

pold, and *Joseph* † made use of the Imperial authority to strengthen their armies. At the worst, it might be feared that *Francis* would avail himself of the success of his arms to display the Imperial authority; and the resources improved on the side of *Russia* would be encouraged by that success. In short, the Emperor could act no other part than that of a common father; and far from being a judge armed to avenge the laws, he was reduced by a regard for himself to appeal only to them, to rely only on them, against the infringers.

THE Court of *Vienna* could no longer impose on a Prince who knew her as well as he knew his own Court. She brooded over an old hatred and former resentments: she would not begin the war. But she did not dissemble that she flattered herself with not being attacked with impunity. However, the alliance with *France* was not relished by all the Ministers; and the experience of all ages has demonstrated that the course of a torrent may be more easily altered than ardour be infused into a Statesman for a plan which he disapproves. The Ministers of the Em-

† [Successively Emperors in 1637, 1658, and 1705. The last was brother to *Charles VI*, who succeeded him, and uncle to the present Empress-Queen.]

press were all nearly in the same degree of credit with her, either on their own account, or by their union with persons whom she honoured with her confidence. They were independent on each other in their departments; and if, in Council, they were not equally masters of the deliberations and resolutions, they compensated that inequality by the connections of their department, which gave them, more or less, a share in the execution.

By a distribution merely accidental, he discovered that the Minister, who promoted the alliance of *Versailles*, and was the principal author of the plan of operations which resulted from it, had the greatest influence in Council, and the least in execution. He found that his genius and character were of a stamp to make him disdain and despise the supple policy of a Courtier; that, satisfied with having proposed and advised what he thought best, he was one who would see with disdain his plan badly traced, his measures disconcerted, his hopes destroyed, and would rather retire from the helm of State than solicit, by prepossession and deference, the concurrence, or complaisance, of the Ministers his colleagues. This stiffness, which perhaps would have rendered him an admirable Visir among the *Turks*, where the Minister reckons himself at an immense distance from the o-
ther

ther Officers of the Sublime Porte, must necessarily mar all his labours, and deprive his Sovereign of the fruit of his genius and his talents: the chiefs of each department, who deemed themselves, at least, his equals, had nothing more at heart than the making him sensible of their influence. The most rational plans were most certainly postponed, the most brilliant might expect the rudest shocks. One may easily imagine the superiority of the King of *Prussia*, absolute in project and in execution, sure to attempt whatever he pleased, and to have no assistance but his own in all occurrences.

THE state of the Court of *Versailles* presented his *Prussian* Majesty with a no less favourable prospect. The Ministers of War and of the Marine were rivals in ambition and favour, and adhered to the latter by the same thread. M. *Machaut* seemed strongly inclined to restore to his department its ancient lustre. M. *d'Argenson* was desirous of maintaining the superiority of his. The former took the properest methods to attain his purpose. The other stuck to a multitude of old customs, which hindered him from pursuing the dictates of his understanding. An enemy to Marshal *Saxe*, he had formerly set a mark on the Officers whom the esteem of that General seemed to design for the first military
em-

employments; and restrained by a false shame, on the death of *Maurice*, from making advances to those brave men whom he had ill-treated, and whose courage was too great to anticipate them, he remained devoted to those amiable men, better formed for the Court than for Camps, men whose merit consists in national bravery and a self-sufficient air; who have read *Follard* and † *Puisegur*, and know how to quote them properly; who trust to spying-glasses, maps, and the Chapter of *accidents*; good speakers, always sure of having a reason against fortune in all events, provided they can make themselves heard. Such connections metamorphosed the Statesman into a Courtier; and the interest of the latter almost always biased the Minister in the distribution of employments, at the expence of the discernment of the former. The observations on the Marine and its Office were the concern of the *English*: it was enough for the King of *Prussia* to be attentive to that of War.

AMONG the great Officers of the Crown, who were in the highest credit, appeared Marshal *de Belle-isle*, who had grown old in the study, love, and practice of the system of rivalry between the Houses of *France* and

† [Marshal of *France*, author of the *Art of War*.]

Austria,

Austria, who had nothing better to alledge of his long life than what he had done, or attempted to do, agreeably to those principles. It would have been making herself uneasy by design, to suppose that the old Marshal would heartily and affectionately embrace the contrary system, and that he would vote for hazarding as much for the Pragmatic of *Charles VI* as he had advised to hazard against the execution of it. It is true that the *French* Ministry might change, and that new Ministers, detached from ancient prejudices, might introduce into the Councils maxims and a system accommodated to times and circumstances. But such a removal was not the work of a day; and he might flatter himself that, before it took place, the restrictions and refinements, in order to attach themselves to a new system, without preventing their return to the old, would have occasioned some faults, and created some embarrassments, sufficient to keep the successors for some time out of the right road. Lastly, the House of *Brunswick* and the Landgrave of *Hesse*, strengthened with the assistance of *England*, made no weak barrier to *Brandenburg*; and allowing that it might be surmounted by an army of sixty or eighty thousand *French*, there remained no less danger and difficulty to *France* from being at so
great

great a distance from her frontiers, with troops so numerous, perpetually on the offensive. It was probable that she would consider the Electorate as a *British* province, and that if she conquered it, she would make it an instrument of peace; that, consequently, she would think of maintaining herself there, and would not go and risk against the *Prussian* forces an army whose defeat would be attended with the loss of its conquest.

THE situation of *Spain* was of little importance to the King of *Prussia*. But that able Monarch made it a powerful argument for animating the *English* in regard to the natural connections of the grandsons of *Lewis XIV* with his successors. The *Spanish* finances were in the greatest disorder. The sea and land forces, equally neglected, left the settlements in the New World, and the Kingdom itself, defenceless. King *Ferdinand*, addicted to amusements entirely foreign to his rank, gave the greatest part of his confidence to a § Minister, whom a long residence at *London* had reconciled to the masters of *Ireland* his country, who by that was prepossessed in favour of the *English*, and who presuming too much, or too little, on the strength of *France*, was violently struck

§ [General Wall.]

with the disparity between that of *Spain* and *Great Britain*. The Court was without ambition and without views, in that ignorant indifference as to external affairs, which seldom fails to attack the Courts where the Sovereign, without children, and without any greatness of mind, reflects with chagrin on his heir, and thinks that he gives him too much by leaving him what cannot be taken from him.

NOTHING intimated that the reign of *Ferdinand* would so soon end with his life †; and even admitting the proximity of that event, there were hopes that the † successor, already known by his oeconomical arrangements in the Kingdom of the *Two Sicilies*, and by his happy discernment in the choice of his Ministers, would apply his first care to the internal part of the Monarchy, that he would wish to recover its exhausted state, and that, before he ventured to interfere in the quarrel of *France*, *England* would have gained such a decisive superiority, that the Auxiliary would be in danger of doing nothing but partake the ill success of his Ally.

IN case the fortune of arms should deceive the hopes of the two Kings Electors, they

† [King *Ferdinand* reigned from July, 1746, to August, 1759.]

† [*Charles*, his brother, King of the *Two Sicilies*,]

had

had in reserve the King of *Sardinia*, whom suitable subsidies might enable to divide the irruption of forty thousand good soldiers between *Provence* and *Lombardy*. Don *Philip*, the Duke of *Modena*, and the *Genoese*, were no formidable enemies. A *British* fleet before *Naples* || compelled the King of the *Two Sicilies* to sign a neutrality. The Emperor, in quality of Duke of *Tuscany*, would have solicited his: it is long since *Venice*, by her pacific temper, has thrown herself out of the balance of *Europe*.

ALL this situation is changed. *France* adheres by conviction to a new system. The Courts of *Versailles* and *Vienna* see that the pre-eminence, which they contested, is on the point of passing to the Courts of *London* and *Berlin*, if it be not there already. Their Statesmen have demonstrated that the two Powers are threatened by enemies, who, if they are suffered to strengthen and increase, will be much more dangerous, and will form very different pretensions from those which set *Lewis XIV* and the † sons of *Leopold* at variance. *France* sees her commerce and navigation become precarious. *Austria* is in danger of trembling for *Prague*, and even

|| [In 1742.]

† [The Emperors *Joseph I.* and *Charles VI.*]

for *Vienna*. The two Powers renounce their old antipathy and emulation, they strengthen their reconciliation by continual alliances, they stand on their guard against surprise, and keep their forces so disposed as not to be taken unawares. *Vienna* knows her enemy, as a politician, as well as a warrior. Her troops, familiarised to the *Prussian* discipline and evolutions, which terrified them at the beginning of this war, no longer imagine that their only security consists in being timidly on the defensive. Baron *de Laudohn* is a master who has made a great number of scholars. The King of *Prussia* himself has formed some Statesmen and warriors for his enemies ||. It is not probable that the *Austrian* Ministers, taught by so many instances which the Monarch has exhibited before their eyes, that the greatest advantages are derived from secrecy, harmony, and expedition, should refuse to unite, or to submit to a chief, in order to contest with him those essential points.

RUSSIA, after having been placed out of her own true interest, will be the friend of all the world, till her constitution, shattered by

|| [Thus *Charles XII* taught his enemies the *Russians* to conquer the *Swedes*, and thus our *English East Indians* may probably teach their vassals the *Nabobs* to become their masters.]

the

the late Emperor *Peter* III, is perfectly re-established §; till circumstances enable her to chuse the allies and enemies which reasons of State shall assign to her.

SWEDEN may be piqued with ambition by powerful subsidies. A new reign may give a different appearance to *Poland* †. The Stadtholder of the Seven Provinces approaches his majority ||. Policy, for the future, will determine the nature and degree of the connections of the Republic with *Great Britain*. *Denmark* is powerfully armed by sea and land. The acquisitions and superiority of *England* have given her new interests. The *Germanic* body reproaches herself for her first indolence and her first fears. The quarrel of the Houses of *Austria* and *Prussia* no longer appears to her a private quarrel; and each State having had an opportunity to discover that the disproportion of its forces leaves it no real security but in

§ [Her present operations against the *Turks*, &c. seem to disprove this assertion.]

† [A new reign, viz. that of the present King, who was elected in 1764, has indeed given a different but a much worse appearance to *Poland*, it being difficult to say whether that unhappy Republican Kingdom has suffered most by her friends or her enemies. And what may be the issue of her present commotions, time only can discover. Certain it is, that her constitution cannot be altered for the worse.]

|| [He came of age in *March*, 1769.]

the

the laws of the Empire, a new infringement of those laws will arm them in earnest against the infringer.

SPAIN appears in a new light. The neighbourhood of the *English*, and their strength in *America*, indissolubly connect her with *France*. She will, for the future, be the principal party in all the wars concerning commerce and navigation: she seems sensible how much it behoves her to put herself on such a footing as to give her ally a confidential second.

In *Italy*, the projected marriage of a † Princess of *Modena* with one of the younger ‡ Archdukes bespeaks a King of *Lombardy*, whom his patrimony, added to the portion of his wife, will render a champion capable of making head against the King of *Sardinia*. In the new system, his *Sardinian* Majesty is, as the saying is, in a cleft stick, which compels him to be quiet.

From this double consideration it follows, that the chance of this war, so contrary in appearance to what might have been expected, displayed itself in the natural order of

† [The Princess *Maria Beatrice*, grand-daughter to the reigning Duke, and only daughter to the Hereditary Prince.]

‡ [The Arch-duke *Ferdinand*, second brother to the Emperor. This marriage took place in 1766.]

things to a speculative observer equally able to conceive at large, and to descend to minute particulars.

It follows, that the crisis has ended in time for the victorious party, and that peace, ardently desired by the one to recover from her losses, ought to be dearly prized by the other, in regard to whom circumstances are so altered, that in a new war she will scarce again have any of those advantages to which she is indebted for her brilliant success.



LETTER XXXII.

TO MR. HENRY F.

The Author communicates his return to England.

SIR,

THOUGH I reckon to be at *London* as soon as this letter, the uncertainty of finding you there makes me apprise you of my return to *England*. I will deliver to your porter the little purchases, for which you were pleased to give me a commission; and I will add to them the letter with which our illustrious and delightful Solitaries have entrusted me. As soon as I have paid the first visit which I owe to many persons of your acquaintance, I will repair to you, Sir, where-ever you are, to present to you the man whom you condescend to number among your friends; and who is very sincerely your servant.

[APPENDIX.

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NEW YORK
1911

[A P P E N D I X.

N^o. I.

VOL. II. } TO the account here given of
 p. 107. } the right claimed by the
 Parliaments of verifying, or registering, the
 King's Edicts, it may be proper to add that,
 in *November, 1770*, the Parliament of *Paris*
 received an Edict, by which his Majesty
 commanded them to hold as a law the indis-
 pensable obligation all the Sovereign Courts
 are under to register the laws which he ad-
 dresses to them, when the Monarch, not-
 withstanding their remonstrances, persists in
 enforcing the execution of his will. And
 on their remonstrating and resolving not to
 register the Edict, the King's Counsel re-
 ceived orders from the King to withdraw it,
 and the Parliament was summoned to meet
 at the Castle of *Versailles, December 7*, where,
 in a Bed of Justice, composed of one hun-
 dred

dred and eight persons, among whom were ten Princes of the Blood, after his Majesty had entered, and every one had taken his place, the Chancellor, M. *Maupeou*, by the King's order, spoke as follows :

“ *Gentlemen,*

“ His Majesty had reason to think that you would have received with respect and submission a law which contains true principles ; principles avowed and defended by our ancestors, and consecrated in the archives of our history. Can your refusal to register this law proceed then from your attachment to new ideas, and has a transient ferment left such deep impressions on your hearts ? Trace back the institution of Parliaments ; follow them in their progress ; and you will see that they derive their existence and their power from the Kings, and that the plenitude of that power ever resides in the hand which communicated it. They neither are an emanation nor a part of each other. The power which created them has circumscribed their authority, assigned them their limits, and fixed the matter, as well as manner, of their jurisdiction. Charged with the application of the laws, you have not the power to stretch nor restrain their dispositions. It is the province of the power that has established

blished them to elucidate their obscurity by new laws. You are bound by the most sacred oaths to administer justice, and you cannot suspend nor abandon your engagements with the King, and the obligations you have contracted with the people. When the legislator manifests his will, you are his organ, and his goodness permits you to be his Council. He invites you to enlighten him by your knowledge, and commands you to shew him the truth. There your Ministry ends. The King, in his wisdom, weighs your observations: he balances them with the motives which determine him; and in that point of view, which takes in the whole of the Monarchy, he judges of the advantages or inconveniences of the law. If he then commands, you owe him the most implicit obedience. If your rights extended farther, if your resistance had no bounds, you would no longer be his officers, but his masters. His will would be subservient to yours; the Majesty of the Throne would reside no where but in your assemblies; and stripped of the most essential prerogatives of the Crown, dependent in the establishment of the laws, dependent in the execution of them, the Crown would preserve only the name, the empty shadow, of Sovereignty. But though public order, though the most sacred titles

revolt against such chimerical pretensions, the rank which is assigned you, the functions which are entrusted to you, are not the less honourable, nor less august. The King imparts to you the most precious portion of his power, the right of enforcing respect to his laws, of punishing offences, of preserving domestic peace, and of defending the community against every attack. Maintain the dignity of that Ministry; let your actions, if possible, do honour to it; let the people, penetrated with the equity of your decisions, bless the hand that has imprinted on you the character of Magistrates. Ever submissive, ever respectful, conciliate zeal with obedience, and reflect a light on authority, but never resist it."

This speech being ended, the First President, and all the Presidents and Counsellors, put one knee to the ground: on the Chancellor saying, "The King commands you to rise," they rose, and stood uncovered. The First President then said,

"SIRE,

"YOUR Parliament never sees your Majesty display your authority, without being oppressed with that deep sorrow and consternation which acts of arbitrary power inspire. The sentiments, Sire, engraven on the hearts of all the Magistrates of your Parliament,
are

are grounded on the purest love for your sacred person. The inexhaustible fund of gentleness and benevolence, which all your subjects acknowledge to be the characteristic of your Majesty, is irreconcilable with these dreadful circumstances which threaten the laws of the Kingdom, and the constitution of the State, with dangerous infringements.

“YOUR Parliament cannot depart from principles, the maintaining of which is equally useful to your Majesty and your subjects, without being wanting in what is prescribed to it by its attachment to the person and service of your Majesty, the universal vow of all the Orders of the State, and the fidelity it owes to the oath it has taken to keep and observe the laws of the kingdom. *Lewis XI* has deposited in our Registers the form of the oath he took at his accession to the Crown, by letters registered in Parliament the 22d of *April*, 1482; willing, by that solemn act, that the Magistrates should never lose sight of the obligation imposed on them to acquit the Kings, in that respect, from the oath they take at their coronation, and to attend to it in such manner, that, through the neglect of the Magistrates, no complaints may thence arise, nor to the Kings any charge upon their conscience.

IN the same spirit, Sire, and by virtue of the same obligation, your Parliament, on a far less important occasion, declared, the 1st of *March*, 1583, "That, whereas the Edict " is against the fundamental laws of the " State, from which laws we cannot derogate, your Parliament cannot proceed to " its verification."

" Permit your Parliament, Sire, at the foot of your throne, to make use of the same expressions ; and let your paternal heart judge, with that goodness inherent to it, whether your Parliament could have proceeded to the registering of the Edict your Majesty was pleased to send to it."

THIS speech being ended, the Chancellor, by the King's orders, commanded the Edict to be registered. And the Parliament still beseeching the King to withdraw his Edict, the First President and all the Members received letters *de cachet*, *January* 22, 1771, banishing them to several villages in the neighbourhood of *Paris*; and on the 23d, his Majesty, by letters patent, erected a new Parliament, or Court of Justice, under the name of the King's Court, and on *February* 22, he also branched the Parliament of *Paris* into six different Parliaments, as mentioned Vol. I. p. 94 *Note*. The other Parliaments have also been suppressed and banished.

N^o. 2.

VOL. II. } **M**ONTESQUIEU's words
 p. 112. } are these: "It is not enough to have intermediate powers in a Monarchy; there must also be a depositary of the laws. This depositary can only be the political bodies which promulge the new laws, and revive the obsolete. The ignorance natural to the Nobility, their indolence and contempt for civil Government, require that there should be a body which should incessantly extricate the laws from the dust in which they would be buried. The Prince's Council is not a proper depositary. It is in its nature the depositary of the momentary will of the Prince, and not of the fundamental laws. Besides, the Prince's Council is continually changing; it is neither permanent nor numerous; nor has it a sufficient share of the confidence of the people; it is therefore incapable of setting them right in difficult conjunctures, or reducing them to proper obedience."

Spirit of Laws, B. II. Ch. 4.

OF this author Lord *Chesterfield* says,
 "His virtues did honour to human nature,
 his writings, justice. A friend to mankind,
 he

he asserted their undoubted and unalienable rights and freedoms even in his own country, whose prejudice in matters of religion and government he had long lamented, and endeavoured (not without some success) to remove. He well knew and justly admired the happy constitution of this country, where fixed and known laws restrain Monarchy from tyranny, and liberty from licentiousness. His works will illustrate his name, and survive him as long as right reason, moral obligation, and the true spirit of laws shall be understood, respected, and maintained."].

END OF VOL. II.

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